A Healthier Tomorrow Starts Today

Prenatal Care & Birth Defects

We want our children to reach their fullest, healthiest potential. Together we can promote healthy pregnancies and lower the risk of birth defects. A healthier tomorrow starts today!

What are Birth Defects?

- Birth defects are health conditions present when a baby is born.
- They can cause problems with a baby's health, how their body develops, or how their body works.
- They can impact a baby's brain, heart, head, spine, limbs, organs, bones, and cognitive development.

Certain actions taken before and during pregnancy can reduce the risk of birth defects.

Tips to Reduce the Risk of Birth Defects:

1. Eat a healthy diet and get enough folic acid
2. Connect with prenatal care **early and throughout your pregnancy**
3. Stay up to date on vaccinations
4. Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and other substance use
5. Get tested for sexually transmitted infections
6. Get help if your basic needs – **safety, housing, and food** – are not being met

What is Prenatal Care?

Prenatal care is the medical care you get when you are pregnant. Your health care provider will check on you and your baby's health during each visit.

Get prenatal care as soon as you find out you are pregnant!

Options for pregnancy testing:

- at-home test
- your regular healthcare provider
- Planned Parenthood
- other community and state locations

WHO PROVIDES PRENATAL CARE?

Type of Provider	What They Are	Services Offered	Services NOT Offered
Family doctor	Licensed doctors that can provide care for the whole family	Some offer prenatal care. Others may refer to OB/GYN	Labor and delivery, Emergency situations, C-sections
Obstetrics/ Gynecology (OB/GYN)	Licensed doctors that specialize in all aspects of pregnancy from prenatal care to postnatal care	Prenatal care, labor, and delivery, Emergency care including C-section	
Family Nurse Practitioner	Licensed providers in women's* health and general healthcare	Prenatal care, Well-Woman program care	Labor and delivery, Emergency situations, C-sections
Certified Nurse Midwife	Licensed providers in women's* health, prenatal care, and birth	Prenatal care, labor, and delivery	Emergency situations, C-sections
Doula	Non-medical professional, labor assistant. Often work alongside other medical providers	Physical, emotional, and partner support during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum	C-sections

Where can I get prenatal care?

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Community-based sites
- Birthing Centers

Did you know all major health insurance covers routine prenatal care?

Pregnancy services are vital benefits, no matter your insurance - (Marketplace, Private, or State Medicaid/BadgerCare).

Things to consider when picking a provider:

- Check with your insurance to see who is in your "**network**" ("In network" means that the doctor, hospital, or other provider accepts your health insurance)
- Your clinic and provider should be in a **location close to where you live and work.** It should also be easy to get there quickly.
- Check with your insurance to determine if there will be **out of pocket costs**. Insurance generally covers the entire cost of prenatal care, but sometimes there might be costs you are responsible to cover.
- Determine **which kind of provider** you want to work with (OB/GYN, midwife, etc.)
- Check online for **reviews**. Ask for recommendations from family and friends.
- You can set up interviews with multiple prenatal care providers. **You do not have to choose the first one you find.**
- **You can work with more than one provider**. For example, you can have a doula and an OB/GYN.

Setting up a prenatal care visit:

- Call, email or fill out a webform to request an appointment with your healthcare provider.
- When setting up the appointment, tell them that you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant.
- Attend your appointment and be honest with your provider about your current habits. They can help you best when they know everything going on in your life.
- Don't have insurance or a prenatal care provider? **Well Badger can help!**

Why is Prenatal Care Important?

Prenatal Care can help you:

- Understand how to keep you and your baby healthy during pregnancy
- Develop a delivery plan
- Learn how to reduce the risk of birth defects including
  - Take a prenatal vitamin with **folic acid**
  - Receive **accurate nutrition** and **vaccination advice**
  - Connect with **resources** to reduce/stop alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and other substance use
- Track your baby's growth

A typical schedule for prenatal care visits can look like this:

- First visit as soon as you suspect you are pregnant
- One visit a month for the first 28 weeks
- Two visits a month for weeks 28-36
- One visit a week from week 36 until delivery

Your doctor may ask you to come in more often if your pregnancy is high risk.

Steps you can take today

1. If you are pregnant, see if you are eligible for **BadgerCare Plus.** **BadgerCare Plus** offers prenatal care coordination, maternity and newborn care, prescription medications including prenatal vitamins, mental and behavioral health services, and more.
2. Find a prenatal care provider.
3. Find a health clinic near you with the Wisconsin Reproductive Health and Family Planning Program.

*While we use the terms 'Women/Woman', the populations referred to in this infographic include anyone who can become pregnant.

Need help finding a prenatal care provider, health insurance, or other prenatal care services?

The Well Badger Resource Team is here for you!

Call
1(800) 642-7837

Text
(608) 360-9328

Email
help@wellbadger.org

Or visit **wellbadger.org** to chat live or search our online directory of free and low-cost services!

A Healthier Tomorrow Starts Today

Learn more about other ways to prevent birth defects at *healthier-tomorrow.org*