

10 things to discuss during a pre-conception visit with your gynecologist

Factors such as your weight or what medications you're taking can play a vital role when preparing for pregnancy. Before you start trying to conceive, talk to your gynecologist about ways to prepare for a healthy pregnancy.

- 1. Pregnancy goals** – It is important to discuss your “reproductive life plan” with your gynecologist. Talk through how many children you eventually want to have, and how many years apart you would like them to be.
- 2. Medical conditions** – If you suffer from any major medical problems, please discuss its effect on pregnancy and vice-versa with your gynecologist.
- 3. Medications** – Discuss all the medications you are taking and your gynecologist will check if they are safe during pregnancy.
- 4. Supplements** – Folic acid is very important during pregnancy. Discuss with your gynecologist how much you should be taking and for how long.
- 5. Family history and genetic conditions** – Be prepared to discuss your and your partner's family health history. Collect information from immediate family members about any diseases that run in your family.
- 6. Lifestyle and social situations** – If you smoke, drink alcohol, or use marijuana or other drugs, let your gynecologist know. Also discuss your work and home environment and any factors that may affect a healthy pregnancy.
- 7. Immunization** – During pregnancy, infections such as rubella and chickenpox can cause congenital birth defects. Discuss with your gynecologist how best to check if you are already protected by vaccination or prior exposure to the disease.
- 8. Infectious diseases** – Be prepared to discuss any history of sexually transmitted infections, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes or HIV.
- 9. Maintaining a healthy weight** – Discuss your ideal pre-pregnancy weight and how to reach and maintain that before you get ready for pregnancy.
- 10. Healthy mind for healthy pregnancy** – Discuss how you feel about your life and your mental health in general. Talk through any pre-diagnosed conditions and see how they may affect, or be affected by, pregnancy.