

HIV: After Pregnancy

What you can do to decrease risks for you, your baby and a future pregnancy



Things to do **EVERY DAY**
for healthy women and babies:

Exercise – 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week

Vitamin – 400 micrograms (mcg) of Folic Acid per day

Educate yourself about medicines and chemicals that can cause birth defects

Reproductive life planning – set your personal goals for birth control and future children

Yearly doctor visits to discuss physical and mental wellness

Diet – Vegetables, fruits, and whole grains daily

Avoid tobacco, drugs, and alcohol

Your partner, friends, and family should be sources of support

Content from everywomanocalifornia.org with permission from the Preconception Health Council of California.



About HIV/AIDS

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is spread through contact with infected blood or body fluid, like during sex. HIV can be spread to your baby at any time during pregnancy, especially during childbirth or breastfeeding. HIV infects the immune system, causing acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). When a person has AIDS, it is harder for the body to fight infections. AIDS can make a person very sick and can cause death. HIV has no cure, but people with HIV can lead long, healthy lives.

How can you stay healthy with HIV?

- See your HIV health care provider regularly.
- Get blood tests to monitor your health. Blood tests can measure the amount of virus in the body (viral load) and its effect on the immune system (CD4 count).
- Your health care provider may recommend you take HIV medications if your viral count is high, your CD4 count is low, or if you have had a serious infection. Don't miss any doses.
- Tell your provider if you have symptoms of weight loss, fatigue, fevers, skin rashes and frequent infections.

How can you keep your baby safe from HIV?

- **DO NOT BREASTFEED.**
- Tell your baby's pediatrician that your baby is at risk for getting HIV. Babies born to mothers with HIV will need special treatment and testing after being born to prevent HIV.
- Make sure your baby gets the recommended vaccinations.

How can you keep your family safe from HIV?

- Take care of yourself. Being a healthy mom can help you take good care of your family. Exercise, eat healthy foods, and follow your provider's advice for treating and monitoring HIV.
- Talk to your provider before you get pregnant again. You may need antiretroviral medications to lower your viral load. Use a reliable form of birth control to avoid unplanned pregnancies. Tell your provider as soon as possible if you think you might be pregnant.
- Talk to your partner and all household members about HIV. Protect your partner from HIV by using condoms and not sharing personal items.

Remember your ABCs:

folic  cid  reastfeeding  ontraception

For more information, go to:

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists :
acog.org/publications/faq/faq113.cfm

Every Woman California: everywomanocalifornia.org/content.cfm?categoriesID=4

March of Dimes: marchofdimes.com/Pregnancy/complications_hiv.html