

Any Concerns?

Have a yarn with your Doctor,  
Dietitian or Midwife  
today.



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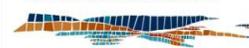


Geraldton  
Regional  
Aboriginal  
Medical  
Service

Diabetes in  
Pregnancy



Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health



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# Preparing for a healthy baby

When preparing for a healthy baby it is important to review your diabetes and general health.

It is highly recommended that women with diabetes plan their pregnancies.

So it is important to seek advice from a diabetes and pregnancy team or a doctor experienced in caring for pregnant women with diabetes before trying to have a baby.



## Acknowledgements:

Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society  
[www.adips.org](http://www.adips.org)

Diabetes Australia—Vic  
[www.dav.org.au](http://www.dav.org.au)

Dietetics Association of Australia  
[www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)

King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women  
<http://wchs.health.wa.gov.au>



# Preparing for a healthy baby

The most important thing to remember for women with diabetes is to:

- have good control of blood sugar levels before trying to fall pregnant
- see your health worker as soon as you fall pregnant or before if you are planning to have a baby.



## Diabetes and Pregnancy Team

You may find it helpful to get in contact with your team of diabetes and pregnancy health professionals at GRAMS for preconception advice

Members of your diabetes and pregnancy team who will help you in your pregnancy journey include:

- Diabetes specialist (Endocrinologist)
- Specialist obstetrician
- Midwife
- Diabetes educator
- Dietitian



# How to prepare for a healthy baby

## Blood Sugar Level Control

To prevent miscarriage and birth defects in your baby it is important to have good control of your blood sugar levels at the time of conception and throughout pregnancy.



## Blood sugar levels during pregnancy

Test Times	Blood Sugar Level
Before Breakfast	4 - 5.5 mmol/L
2 hours after each meal	4 - 7 mmol/L

# Physical Activity During Pregnancy

## Exercise

Being physically active will help control your blood sugar levels. During pregnancy, it is best to do light physical activities such as:

- Walking (briskly if possible) - aim for 15-30 minutes
- Swimming
- Pregnancy hydrotherapy
- Low impact exercise tailored to pregnancy
- Pregnancy pilates or yoga

Exercise will also help you to de-stress, and improve the strength and flexibility of your muscles. This can help to improve circulation, reduce pressure on the back, prevent constipation and prepare the body for labour.

You should not experience any pain with these exercises. Be careful to not get too hot, and remember to drink plenty of water. Talk with your doctor about what is suitable for you.



# Weight Management During Pregnancy

# How to prepare for a healthy baby

## Good Weight Management



It is important to manage your weight gain during pregnancy to help you have good control over your blood sugar levels. Managing your weight will also benefit the baby.

These are the recommended ranges of weight gain during pregnancy. How much weight you should gain depends on your Body Mass Index (BMI) before pregnancy.

Pre-pregnancy BMI	BMI Range	Weight Gain Range (kg)
Underweight	<18.5	12-18
Normal	18.5—25	11.5-16
Overweight	25-30	6-11
Obese	>30	5-9

Your doctor or dietitian can help work out your BMI. It is recommended that if you are carrying weight into pregnancy, a total weight gain of <5kg is fine. If so, this means you would have actually *lost* excess weight during your pregnancy.

## Medications

### Insulin

If you are taking insulin your insulin requirements may change during pregnancy so it is important to speak with your doctor.

### Diabetestablets (Type2Diabetes)

If you are taking tablets for your diabetes before pregnancy you should speak with your doctor . Your doctor can advise you to use Metformin or change to insulin injections to manage your blood sugar in early pregnancy.



### Othermedications

Every medication you are taking, including those for lowering cholesterol and blood pressure, must be reviewed *before* pregnancy or *as soon as you find out you are pregnant*. You many need to stop using many medications while you are pregnant.

# How to prepare for a healthy baby

# Nutrition During Pregnancy

## Contraception

Contraception is important as it allows you to plan your pregnancy for when you are generally healthy and have good control of your blood sugar levels.

Before you stop using contraception it is important to have good control of your blood sugar levels. Poor control in the first 2 months of pregnancy can lead to miscarriage or birth defects.

See your health worker before you stop using contraception or as soon as you fall pregnant.

If you have good control throughout your pregnancy you can deliver your baby in Geraldton.

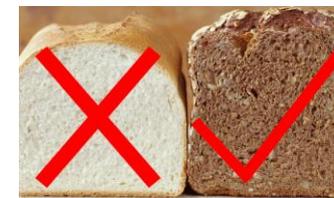
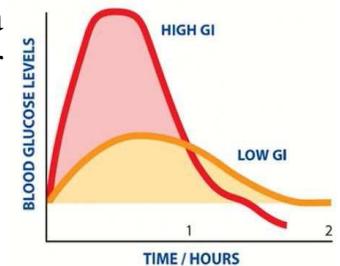
## Choose low GI foods

GI or glycaemic index ranks carbohydrates on their effect on our blood sugar levels. It is important to choose carbohydrates that are low GI because it can help you to control your blood sugar levels.

Low GI carbohydrates are slowly absorbed by the body and only cause a small increase in your blood sugar levels.

Low GI carbohydrates include:

- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Fruits and vegetables
- Basmati or Doongara rice
- Pasta and noodle
- Legumes (beans and lentils)



# Nutrition during Pregnancy

# How to prepare for a healthy baby

## Iron in Pregnancy

Iron is needed to produce red blood cells which carry oxygen around the body. During pregnancy more iron is needed because the mother's volume of blood is larger and the baby's blood is developing.

The **best sources** of iron are in:

- Meat,
- Chicken and
- Fish.



There are also **smaller amounts** found in:

- Legumes/beans,
- Nuts and seeds,
- Green leafy vegetables,
- Iron fortified breakfast cereals
- Whole-grain breads

Some women may find it hard to meet their requirements from diet alone. Iron levels will be tested at different stages of pregnancy to check for deficiency. If necessary an iron supplement may be recommended.



## Complications Screening

Before or as soon as possible after you fall pregnant, it is important to be tested for all diabetes complications.

This includes kidneys, eyes and nerves.

### Test for kidney damage

To test your kidneys the doctor will ask you to give a urine sample to see how much protein is passing through your kidneys and also to see if you have a urinary tract infection (UTI).

### Test for nerve damage

To test for nerve damage in your feet the doctor will measure the pressure sensation or use a small prick to test your pain sensation.

### Test for eye damage

To test your eyes an Eye Specialist will put eye drops in your eyes to make your pupils bigger. This helps them to check for growth of irregular blood vessels in your eyes.

# Nutrition during Pregnancy

What you eat = what baby eats

Pregnancy is a good time to update your nutrition knowledge. The dietitian at GRAMS can talk to you about what to eat during your pregnancy.

To keep you healthy and help your baby grow, it is important that you eat foods that are high in:

- protein,
- iron,
- calcium and
- folate



# Nutrition During Pregnancy

Folate in pregnancy

Folate is an important vitamin in pregnancy as it can help to prevent birth defects of the brain and spine.

Most women can meet their daily requirement from eating a wide variety of leafy green vegetables, fruit, breads, cereals and beans.

However women with diabetes are at greater risk and should take a 5 mg folate supplement before pregnancy and throughout the first 3 months.

