

## Before the Baby

*Being diagnosed with gestational diabetes can be scary. Luckily, there are many things you can do to keep you and your baby healthy both during and after pregnancy.*

### **Go to all your prenatal appointments so your health care provider can keep you and your baby healthy.**

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Gestational diabetes can cause your baby to be larger than normal when you are pregnant. It may cause your baby to have low blood sugar, yellowish skin (jaundice), or trouble breathing at birth. Keeping your prenatal appointments and managing your blood sugar can prevent these conditions.

### **Learn about changes you must make to your daily meals.**

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When you have gestational diabetes, the sugar in your blood can become too high. Changing what you eat can help keep your blood sugar at a safe level. It is important to receive nutritional advice and come up with a plan that will help you manage your meals.

### **Include safe exercise activities in your daily routine.**

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Getting 30 minutes of exercise a day five days a week can also help control blood sugar



levels. Ask your health care provider for suggestions.

### **Ask your health care provider how much weight gain is right for you during pregnancy.**

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Staying within your weight gain range can help control your blood sugar levels and keep your baby healthy.

### **Check your blood sugar levels regularly and write them down to bring to your appointments.**

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You may not have to use medications if you check your blood sugar levels often and control them.

### **Take insulin or other medications as prescribed to control your blood sugar.**

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Sometimes healthy eating and exercise are not enough to control blood sugar levels. You may need to start using insulin or other medications to help prevent health risks to you and your baby.



### **Make a commitment to breastfeeding before your baby is born.**

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Breastfeeding can help delay or prevent diabetes in the future for you and your baby. It can also help prevent obesity in your child.

### **Plan to return for your postpartum checkup after your baby is born.**

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Your diabetes may not go away after the baby is born. Diabetes is a serious disease that may make it difficult for you to care for your baby if it is not treated. Take care of yourself so you can care for your baby.

## After the Baby

*Being diagnosed with gestational diabetes can be scary. Luckily, there are many things you can do to keep you and your baby healthy both during and after pregnancy.*

### Return for your postpartum check-up

Your diabetes may not go away after the baby is born. Have your blood sugar level checked six to twelve weeks after delivery to see if you still have diabetes. You may feel fine, but one in ten mothers with gestational diabetes has diabetes after pregnancy too. If you have diabetes, you will need treatment. If you do not get treatment, you can suffer serious side effects like heart disease, kidney failure, blindness, and stroke.

### Continue to see your health care provider regularly.

Even if you do not have diabetes at your postpartum check-up, many women with gestational diabetes develop diabetes over the next five to ten years after their baby is born. Your health care provider will let you know if you need to be tested **every year or every three years** to see if you develop diabetes at a later time.



### Breastfeed your baby.

Babies whose mothers have had gestational diabetes are at higher risk for developing diabetes later on. Breastfeeding can help prevent childhood obesity and protect your child against diabetes in later years. If you are having difficulties breastfeeding, ask for help.

### Tell your baby's doctor you had gestational diabetes.

Your baby is at a higher risk for developing diabetes and obesity in the future. Your baby's doctor can help you with healthy lifestyle habits for you and your baby to help prevent this.

### Watch your weight.

A healthy weight can help you control diabetes after pregnancy or help prevent diabetes in the future. Ask your health care provider about a healthy weight goal for you.



### Make healthy food and activity choices.

Healthy foods such as vegetables and fruit, lean meat, low fat dairy products and whole grains are one way to help you and your baby stay healthy. Including physical activity in your daily schedule every day is another. Adopting healthier habits now can prevent diabetes for you and your baby in the future. Ask your health care provider for tips on how to eat smart and move more, or go to **www.myeatsmarmovemore.com**.

