

## Partnering with your physician to prevent prenatal infections.

Partnering with your physician is always the best way to stay healthy and avoid illness and infection, particularly during pregnancy, when women are responsible not only for their own health, but that of their developing infant.

Even with your physician's help, it's impossible to avoid all sources of infection while you're pregnant. But there are steps you can take to reduce the risk of infection and make it less likely that you'll get sick.

Regular, diligent prenatal care is a crucial first step. Your physician should be your first and primary point of contact for information about the many infections that can affect a pregnancy. With a few simple tests, you will be able to rule out some infections based on your own immunity, along with other variables like geography, dietary habits and medical history.

The list of infections that can affect your pregnancy is a lengthy one, and it includes:

- Bacterial vaginosis
- Chicken pox
- Cytomegalovirus
- Group B strep
- Hepatitis B
- Listeriosis
- Rubella (German measles)
- Sexually Transmitted infections
- Urinary Tract Infections
- Zika Virus

Building an understanding of how infections are transmitted and how to avoid them makes good sense for everyone. Your doctor can help you with information about prenatal infections and how to avoid them. However, practical health and hygiene practices are always the first line of defense from infection.

Ultimately, maintaining your health during pregnancy comes down to being diligent about your health. Frequent hand washing and avoiding contagious people are obvious priorities. In addition, pregnant women can avoid infection by not sharing drinking glasses or utensils, not changing cat litter, practicing safe sex and avoiding undercooked meat, fish or eggs.

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