

# StarBabies



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017

A publication of Texas Children's Health Plan

## In this ISSUE

- 2 Protect your family from colds and flu this holiday season
- 3 Do you have a Postpartum Plan?
- 4 Avoid getting sick during holiday travel
- 5 Healthy eating... for two
- 6 Get the care you need

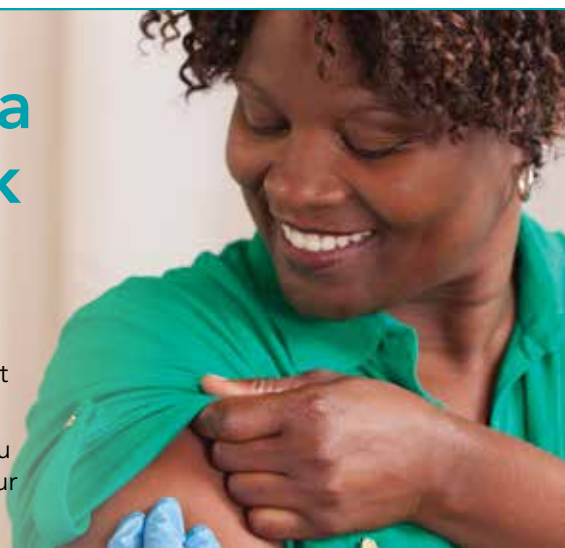
Events listed on back cover.

CM-1117-323

## National Influenza Vaccination Week

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has designated **December 3 through 9** as National Influenza Vaccination Week. This is a national campaign that was established to focus on the importance of vaccination against the flu.

The best way to prevent the flu is to get the flu shot. It's not too late! If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet this year, call your doctor.



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1167  
N. HOUSTON, TX



Texas Children's Health Plan  
P.O. Box 301011  
Houston, TX 77230-1011

# Arm yourself against the flu!

**Flu season is here.** You can help stop the spread of flu by getting the flu shot. It's especially important for women who are pregnant to get the flu vaccine because you are at a higher risk for problems from the flu. Not only is it safe for pregnant women to get the flu shot, it could save you or your baby's life.

Don't wait. Protect yourself and your family. You can get the flu shot at your doctor's office.



## Protect your family from colds and flu this holiday season

**You can keep seasonal flu out of your holiday plans.** The flu and colds are viruses that spread easily from one person to another. Even if you have already had the flu this year, you could get it again because there are several types each season. A lot of people spend time in crowds this time of year and the flu really starts to spread. It can be especially dangerous for pregnant women.

### Here are some things you can do to help keep colds and flu from ruining your holidays.

- Get a flu shot. This is the best way to help prevent flu.
- Wash your and your child's hands often.
- Make sure people around you cover their mouth when coughing or sneezing. It is best to cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Limit exposure to people who have a cold or the flu.
- Make sure your family eats a healthy diet, gets enough rest, and plenty of exercise to keep immune systems strong.
- Carry hand sanitizer with you. Use it often.
- Don't share food or drinks. Use separate cups and utensils for everyone.





## Do you have a Postpartum Plan?

A postpartum plan can help parents reduce stress and ease the transition period by identifying resources before they're needed. Key aspects include:

- **Rest.** Finding help during the day and night following the birth of a baby is important. Prepare a list of names and contact information of people available to help you during these times.
- **Nutrition.** Plan to have meals prepared and/or delivered for the first weeks after the baby arrives.
- **Support for older siblings.** Find people who will be able to spend quality time with older children, as well as drive them to school, daycare, and activities.

Remember to schedule a postpartum visit between 21-56 days after the delivery of the baby and when requested by your provider.

Visit: [www.texaschildrenshealthplan.org/starbabies/postpartum](http://www.texaschildrenshealthplan.org/starbabies/postpartum)



## Check your baby's fever

When your baby is not feeling well, one of the first things you should do is check for a fever. Although a fever isn't an illness itself, it is usually a sign that the body's immune systems are fighting against an infection.

A fever occurs when the temperature rises above its normal range. Fever is a body temperature over 99 to 99.5 degrees Fahrenheit (F), or 100 to 100.5 degrees F by rectum. The normal temperature for most children is around 98.6 degrees F.

A quick way to tell if your baby has a fever is to kiss or touch his forehead. If you think he feels hot, you are probably right. A thermometer will confirm an exact temperature reading.

**Call our Nurse Help Line at 1-800-686-3831 or your baby's doctor when:**

- Your baby is younger than 2 months and has a fever of 100.2 degrees F (rectal) or higher.
- Your baby is between 2 and 6 months old and has a fever of 101 degrees F (rectal) or higher.
- Your baby is 6 months or older and has a fever of 103 degrees F (rectal) or higher.



# Avoid getting sick during holiday travel

Your chances of catching a virus are greater during this time of holiday travel. For one thing, it's cold and flu season. For another, airports and bus stations are likely to be more crowded now. Add that to the immune system-suppressing stress of the holiday rush and your extra vulnerability during pregnancy and it could be a recipe for disaster.

The good news is there are steps you can take to reduce your risks of getting sick while on the road this holiday season:

- Pack sanitizer wipes and use them to clean airplane tray tables, arm rests, and any other surface you come into contact with.
- Avoid items that are used by many people, such as pillows, blankets, and magazines on planes. These can be loaded with germs from previous passengers.
- Boost your immune system by staying active, eating well, and getting plenty of rest in the days leading up to your travel.
- Ask if you can move your seat if someone near you is coughing. Or, you could bring a mask to wear if you think someone next to you is sick.
- Wash your hands often or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Drink water or use a saline spray to keep nasal passages moist and hydrated.

Source: [newsmax.com](http://newsmax.com), [foxnews.com](http://foxnews.com)

## Pregnancy travel tips

**Hitting the road during the holidays?** These smart strategies will make long trips more comfortable for moms-to-be.

**Timing.** The second trimester (14 to 27 weeks) is the best time to travel during pregnancy. During the first trimester, you may feel too nauseous and tired for a long trip. And during the third trimester, your doctor may not want you to travel at all.

**Pick the right seat.** Sit in the front to lessen your chance of feeling nauseous.

**Drink up.** Drinking fluids like water and juice can help prevent swelling of your hands, legs, and feet. And it can help to reduce swelling in your nasal passages, which can make you feel stuffy.

**Pack snacks.** The best way to keep from feeling sick to your stomach is to eat small amounts during the day. Whole-grain crackers, fruit, veggies, and nuts are healthy choices that are easy to pack. Avoid fried or spicy foods on the day of travel—they can make nausea worse.

**Buckle up.** In the car, put the bottom strap of the seat belt under your baby bump for comfort. Be sure to keep the top strap across your chest where it would normally lay.

**It is always a good idea to discuss your travel plans with your provider.**

Source: [WhatToExpect.com](http://WhatToExpect.com)



**BABY  
ON  
BOARD?**





# Healthy eating... for two

The holidays are here with tempting treats like pumpkin pie, cookies, and candy canes. Did you know that most women should gain about 25 to 35 pounds during pregnancy? However, it is important to eat right during your pregnancy. You can avoid extra weight gain by eating balanced meals. This includes options with protein and carbohydrates such as a salad that is rich in vitamins and minerals.

**Here are a few tips to avoid extra weight gain during the holidays:**

- Portion control is key. You can eat the foods you like, but in moderation.
- Maintain your appetite during the day. Eat healthy snacks to avoid eating too much at big holiday meals.
- Sweet potato casserole and pumpkin pie are high in calories and sugar. Limit these foods, especially if your blood sugar is high or if you're being monitored.
- Dark meat chicken and turkey with skin are high in fat. A better choice is white meat without the skin.
- Limit sweets. Pick healthy foods on the buffet.
- Walk and exercise to stay active.

## Maple-Apple Pecan Crunch Pumpkin Pie



### Ingredients:

- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin
- ½ cup sugar (or substitute for sweetener or raw honey)
- 2 tablespoons honey or pure maple syrup
- 1½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- ½ cup refrigerated or frozen egg product, thawed, or 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¾ cup evaporated fat-free milk (or substitute for almond or coconut milk)
- 2 medium Gala or Jonathan apples or 2 ripe pears
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts, toasted
- 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup

### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 1- ½-quart souffle dish, 8-inch springform pan, or 8 4-ounce ramekins; set aside. For filling, in a medium bowl, combine pumpkin, sugar, honey, and pie spice. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat lightly with a fork just until combined. Gradually stir in evaporated milk. Pour into prepared dish, pan, or ramekins. If using a springform pan, place on a foil-lined baking sheet. If using ramekins, place in a 15x10x1-inch baking pan.
2. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes for dish or pan or 30 to 35 minutes for ramekins or until center appears set when gently shaken. Cool 1 hour on a wire rack. Cover and chill at least 2 hours or up to 24 hours before serving.
3. Meanwhile, core, quarter and thinly slice apples (or pears) and place in a large skillet with the water. Cook, covered, over medium heat for 5 minutes or just until softened and pliable but not mushy. Drain off liquid.
4. To serve the pie, arrange the cooked apple (or pear) slices atop the pumpkin. Sprinkle with pecans (or walnuts) and drizzle with maple syrup. If using a springform pan, loosen pumpkin from sides of pan by running a thin metal spatula around the edge; cut into wedges to serve. If using souffle dish, spoon pumpkin out of the dish onto serving plates.

Source: [eatingwell.com](http://eatingwell.com)

# Get the care **you need**

We want our expecting moms to have a great pregnancy. And that means it's important for you to go to the doctor. After all, a healthy mom and a happy baby begin with quality prenatal care!

**Don't wait. Get seen right away.** As soon as you think you're pregnant, you should schedule your first prenatal visit. Your OB/GYN will want to see you in your first trimester or within 42 days of joining Texas Children's Health Plan.

**Don't forget about your postpartum checkup.** It is also important for you to go for a postpartum checkup after having your baby. Your OB/GYN MUST see you within 3 to 6 weeks after delivery. To sign your newborn up for Medicaid, call 2-1-1 and report the birth of your child to Health and Human Services Commission or visit [yourtexasbenefits.com](http://yourtexasbenefits.com).

**Cervical Cancer Screening.** Routine pap smears are a key to the prevention and early detection of cervical cancer. Women ages 21–29 years should be tested every 3 years. For women ages 30–65, a pap smear with testing for human papillomavirus (HPV) every 5 years is preferred but screening with just a pap smear every 3 years is OK. Plan a visit with your doctor or local community clinic.

**Mammography.** Women are encouraged to talk with their doctor about screening for breast cancer with a mammogram. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends annual mammograms beginning at age 40. Early detection can lead to improved outcomes in women diagnosed with breast cancer. Plan a visit with your doctor or local community clinic.

For help finding a doctor visit [TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org](http://TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org) under "Find a Doctor" or call Member Services at **1-866-959-2555 (STAR)**. For help scheduling an appointment, you can call Member Services, email us at [HealthPlan@texaschildrens.org](mailto:HealthPlan@texaschildrens.org), or we can offer a 3-way call with you and the provider.



## Nurse Help Line

Call our  
**Nurse Help Line**  
**24 hours a day,**  
**7 days a week at**  
**1-800-686-3831**

to speak with a registered nurse.

Call Member Services at  
**1-866-959-2555 (STAR)**  
for help picking a doctor,  
midwife, or OB/GYN.

## StarBabies

is published monthly by  
Texas Children's Health Plan.

Send comments to:

**Star Babies**  
Texas Children's Health Plan  
PO Box 301011  
Houston, TX 77230-1011

Director, Marketing  
**Cristina Garcia Gamboa**

Editor  
**Sara Ledezma**

Layout designer  
**Scott Redding**

©2017 Texas Children's Health Plan.  
All rights reserved.

PO Box 301011  
Houston, Texas 77230-1011

12/2017