



StarBabies

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Arm yourself against the flu!

Flu season is here. You can help stop the spread of the 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.



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Week 29

Your baby's development

Your baby continues to be active, and those first few flutters of movement have given way to hard jabs and punches that may take your breath away. If you notice a decrease in movement, do a fetal kick count: Your baby should move at least 10 times in 2 hours. If your baby moves less, talk to your health care provider.

Your body

During pregnancy, iron is important for replenishing the red blood cell supply. You should be eating at least 30 milligrams of iron each day. Because iron deficiency is common during pregnancy, your health care provider may recommend that you have a blood test to check your iron level. If it's low, you may be prescribed an iron supplement.

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Have a health care visit – online



For non-emergencies, skip the ER and use Texas Children's Anywhere Care.

When you or your child need medical treatment quickly, what's your first line of defense? Urgent care? The emergency room? Waiting until the next available appointment?

Now, with online health care visits, Texas Children's Health Plan members can have a visit from anywhere – in minutes. For convenient, online visits with a provider*, all you need is a smartphone, tablet, or computer and you can access providers 24/7. Providers can recommend treatment and prescribe medication, if necessary.

The benefits of online health care visits:

- 24/7 access to trusted providers.
- Great for non-emergencies, such as vomiting and diarrhea, rashes, pink eye, colds, coughs, and more.
- Prescriptions, if necessary, sent to the pharmacy of your choice.
- Face-to-face online provider visits via smartphone, tablet, or computer.

* Texas Children's Anywhere Care providers may include doctors and advanced practice providers.



Next time you or your child need medical help for a non-emergency, try an online health care visit by downloading our Texas Children's Anywhere Care app today. We are always here for you and your family.

To learn more, visit

texaschildrenshealthplan.org/anywherecare

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.

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 and click "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, or we can offer a 3-way call with you and the provider.

Folic acid and pregnancy

Having a healthy baby means making sure you're healthy too. One of the most important things you can do to help prevent serious birth defects in your baby is to get enough folic acid every day — especially before conception and during early pregnancy.

What is folic acid?

Folic acid (or folate) is a B vitamin (B9) found mostly in dark green vegetables like broccoli and spinach, legumes such as beans and peas, and enriched grains.

What are the benefits of folic acid?

Women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant should get at least 400 micrograms (0.4 milligrams) of folic acid daily before conception and for at least 3 months afterward. Studies show that this greatly reduces a baby's risk of serious neural tube defects.

What are neural tube defects?

Neural tube defects are birth defects that involve incomplete development of the brain and spinal cord. The most common neural tube defects are:

- **Spina Bifida:** when the spinal cord and spinal column don't completely close
- **Anencephaly:** a severe underdevelopment of the brain

- **Encephalocele:** when brain tissue protrudes out to the skin through an opening in the skull

All of these defects happen during the first 28 days of pregnancy — usually before a woman even knows she's pregnant.

That's why it's so important for all women of childbearing age to get enough folic acid — not just those who are trying to become pregnant. Half of all pregnancies are not planned, so any woman who could become pregnant should make sure she gets enough folic acid.

It's not clear why folic acid has such a profound effect on the prevention of neural tube defects. But experts do know that it's vital to the development of DNA. As a result, folic acid plays a large role in cell growth and development, as well as tissue formation.

How can I get enough folic acid?

How can women of childbearing age — and especially those who are planning a pregnancy — get enough folic acid every day?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires food-makers to add folic acid to their enriched grain products. So you can boost your intake by eating



breakfast cereals, breads, pastas, and rice that have 100% of the recommended daily folic acid allowance. Check the product's label for this information.

But for most women, eating fortified foods isn't enough. To reach the recommended daily level, you'll probably need a vitamin supplement. During pregnancy, you need more of all of the essential nutrients than you did before you became pregnant.

Prenatal vitamins shouldn't replace a well-balanced diet. But taking them can give your body — and your baby — an added boost of vitamins and minerals. Some health care providers recommend taking a folic acid supplement in addition to a prenatal vitamin. Talk to your doctor about your daily folic acid intake. He or she might recommend a prescription supplement, an over-the-counter brand, or both.

Also talk to your doctor if you've already had a pregnancy that was affected by a neural tube defect or if you or your partner were affected by one yourselves. The doctor may recommend that you take a higher dose of folic acid (even before getting pregnant).

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Garlic-Rosemary Oven Fries

Ingredients:

- 4 small potatoes
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. dried rosemary

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°F (230°C).
2. Peel the potatoes and cut them into ½-inch strips.
3. In a large bowl, toss the potatoes with canola oil, garlic powder, and rosemary until the strips are coated.
4. Place the coated potato strips in a single layer on a baking sheet, and bake for 30-35 minutes, or until golden brown. Turn potato strips once or twice during cooking to cook evenly.

Serves: 4

Nutritional analysis (per serving):

- 200 calories
- 3g fiber
- 5g protein
- 0mg cholesterol
- 3.5g fat
- 10mg sodium
- 0g sat. fat
- 1g sugars
- 39g carbohydrate

This recipe has important nutrients for mom and baby, including:

Vitamin C

Vitamin C plays an important role in tissue growth and repair and bone and tooth development. Vitamin C also helps the body absorb iron. Good sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits, broccoli, tomatoes, and fortified fruit juices.

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Call our Nurse Help Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **1-800-686-3831** to speak with a registered nurse. For help picking a doctor, midwife, or OB/GYN, call Member Services at **1-866-959-2555 (STAR)**.

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