Help Prevent Birth Defects Before You Become Pregnant

RHODE ISLAND BIRTH DEFECTS PROGRAM

1) See your healthcare professional: Maintain regularly scheduled visits

2) Take 400-800 mcg of folic acid daily: vitamins and 100% fortified cereals

3) Maintain a healthy weight: Talk to your healthcare provider

4) Control Chronic Conditions: Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Obesity, Epilepsy

5) Stop Smoking and Drinking:
   • Smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes can cause birth defects, low birth weights and infant death
   • There is no safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy. Drinking during pregnancy can cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

6) Taking Medications: Talk to your healthcare provider about medications you are taking including over the counter, dietary, prescription and herbal medicines

7) Protect against Zika Virus:
   • Avoid traveling to Zika infected areas, if necessary, talk to your physician first
   • Protect against mosquito bites by wearing long sleeves, pants, a hat and socks
   • Use insect repellent with 20% Deet
   • If your partner has traveled to or lives in Zika areas, use condoms every time you have sex (vaginal, oral, anal) to protect against Zika infections or refrain from having sex while pregnant

www.health.ri.gov/programs/birthdefects/