

## 36 Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy

By Scott LaFee | January 05, 2016

**B**efore you can take care of your new baby, you need to take care of yourself and your unborn child. There's a lot of advice out there. Much of it is common sense, but some things – like avoiding cat litter – might be news. Your first tip: As soon as you suspect you're pregnant, see your doctor and visit [Pregnancy and Childbirth](#) at UC San Diego Health.

- Take a prenatal vitamin
- Exercise regularly
- Write a birth plan
- Educate yourself
- Change your chores (avoid harsh or toxic cleaners, heavy lifting)
- Track your weight gain (normal weight gain is 25-35 pounds)
- Get comfortable shoes
- Eat folate-rich foods (lentils, asparagus, oranges, fortified cereals)
- Eat calcium-rich foods (dairy, canned fish, soy)
- Eat more fish (except those [high in mercury](#) [↗](#))
- Eat foods with fiber
- Don't eat soft cheeses (unpasteurized styles like Brie and feta may contain bacteria that can cause fever, miscarriage or pregnancy complications)
- Eat your veggies
- Eat five or six well-balanced meals each day
- But don't overeat. You only need 300-500 additional calories per day. Keep a food diary.
- Limit caffeine
- Drink plenty of fluids (six 8-ounce glasses of water per day)



- Don't drink alcohol
- Wear sunscreen
- Fly smart (avoid air travel if possible early and late in pregnancy)
- Avoid changing cat litter (to reduce risk of toxoplasmosis)
- Give in to cravings – sometimes
- Know when to call your doctor with concerns
- Don't smoke; avoid secondhand smoke
- Get enough sleep
- Wear your seatbelt
- Don't take over-the-counter medications or herbal remedies without medical consultation
- See your dentist
- Take a pregnancy class
- Baby sit a friend's baby for some real-world experience
- Tour birth facilities
- Practice relaxation techniques daily (yoga, stretching, deep breathing, massage)
- Don't overmedicate
- Exercise, but don't overdo it
- Stretch before bed to avoid leg cramps
- Take a picture of yourself before the baby arrives



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**Care at UC San Diego Health**

[Obstetrics and Gynecology](#)

[Pregnancy and Childbirth](#)

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