

## Pregnancy? This information is essential

Did you know that the three months before your pregnancy are hugely important for the development and health of your baby? And even for generations to come? If you're wondering why this is and what you can do to help the baby in your belly grow up as strong as healthy as possible.

Read more or go to [www.strakswangerworden.nl](http://www.strakswangerworden.nl)

If one of these 10 points applies to you, or if you have any questions:

Every prenatal clinic offers a free consultation at their special office hours for people wishing to conceive. During the consultation, you can discuss your situation with the midwife, who will give you personal advice to make sure you and your future child have the best chance of a great and healthy start!



Go to [www.schapenkopjes.nl](http://www.schapenkopjes.nl) to find a midwife near you and make an appointment right away.



Did you know... that while you might not even know you're pregnant, most of your baby's organs are already in the making? So give yourself and your baby the best chance and get ready early!



# Pregnancy

Here are 10 things to know!

**Jong JGZ**  
groeit met je mee.





## 1. Genetic inheritance

Genetic disorders occur in many families. There is a chance you might pass these on to your baby. If this is the case in your family, or you are not sure and would like to find out, talk to your primary care physician or midwife before getting pregnant.



## 2. Previous pregnancies

If you have been pregnant before and experienced issues, it is a good idea to talk to a doctor or midwife before your next pregnancy. An examination or treatment might reduce the likelihood of the same happening again.



## 3. Folic acid

Take a folic acid tablet once a day. Folic acid helps with the development of your baby's brain and nervous system. It reduces the risk of spina bifida, cardiovascular and urinary system defects and some types of childhood cancer. Your body does not produce its own folic acid. Because you often don't know exactly when you'll get pregnant, it is important to start taking folic acid four weeks before you start trying to conceive. Folic acid is available from drugstores/pharmacies.



## 4. Nutrition

Healthy eating is important, because your baby needs good nutrients. Try to adjust your diet even before you get pregnant to make sure your body is in the best possible shape. Be careful with raw foods (such as egg, meat, cheese, etc.) These can cause infections that are harmful for your baby, even if you get this infection right before you get pregnant.

The Voedingscentrum website has more information about food and nutrition.



## 5. Weight

A healthy weight increases the chances of a healthy baby. If you have a high BMI, there is a higher risk of preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, and growth disorders. If your BMI is too low, there is a higher risk of miscarriage, preterm birth and stunted growth. In both cases, it may take longer to get pregnant. If you want to have a healthy weight and reduce these risks, make an appointment with your primary care physician or dietician.



## 6. Smoking

Not smoking before and during pregnancy is better for the baby's brain development and growth. It also ensures that your child is less likely to be overweight or suffer behavioral issues later in life. Men and women who smoke are less fertile, so it may take longer to get pregnant. (Second-hand) smoking means your baby is exposed to harmful substances. There is a higher risk of miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy and birth defects such as cleft lip, club foot, or heart defect.



[Scan the QR code for more information.](#)



## 7. Alcohol & Drugs

Alcohol reduces fertility in men and women. It may also damage the egg and sperm cells. Alcohol increases the risk of miscarriage and birth defects. The more alcohol, the higher the risk of issues.

Drugs are also harmful to your pregnancy, your health and the development of your baby. Men who use drugs may become impotent. If you use drugs, such as cocaine, cannabis, opiates and amphetamines, it is important to stop doing so.



[More information? Scan the QR code.](#)



## 8. Stress

Problems and stress are part of life. It could be because of illness in the family, a fight with your partner, or financial problems. Too much stress is not good. It could cause high blood pressure, for example, which could be dangerous for you and your baby. Seek help. Talk to a trusted friend or family member. Or contact your primary care physician who can also refer you to a social worker or psychologist.



## 9. Risks at home or at work

Heavy physical work, contact with hazardous substances, shift work, heavy workload, noise and radiation can all affect your fertility and your pregnancy. Talk about this with your company doctor before you become pregnant. Everything you discuss with them is confidential. Employers are required to protect the health and safety of employees and of the unborn child.



## 10. Medication and illnesses

When you are sick, you often rely on medication. Some medications may pose risks to fertility, your pregnancy or your unborn baby. Always let your doctor and/or pharmacist know you are trying to conceive. Never stop your medication on your own initiative. The illness itself may also affect your pregnancy or your baby. Therefore, discuss your wish to conceive with your doctor, so that your pregnancy is as safe as possible for you and your baby.



**Do you want to check your "10 for a healthy pregnancy?"**

[Scan the QR code and complete the pregnancy questionnaire.](#)