

NOVEMBER

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November 20

ISDH Office of Women's Health Wellness Watch

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana

November Spotlight - National Diabetes Month

If you had gestational diabetes during any pregnancy, you probably learned how important it is to eat healthy, be active and control your blood sugar for your health and the health of your baby. Many women don't realize a healthy lifestyle needs to continue after the baby is born. Women who have had gestational diabetes have a 40 to 60% chance of developing type 2 diabetes in the future, and their child is also at increased risk for obesity and type 2 diabetes.¹

Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and affects 5.8% , or 4,787, pregnancies in Indiana.² If you had gestational diabetes in the past, your doctor or obstetrician should test you for type 2 diabetes six to 12 weeks after the baby is born with a two-hour glucose tolerance test, and at least every three years after that with the diabetes test your doctor chooses. Some women continue to have diabetes after the baby is born. Many others develop it within five to 10 years, and for others, it shows up later in life. There are often no signs or symptoms, which is why regular checks by your doctor are needed.

Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition where a person has to actively manage their own blood sugar to keep it in con-

trol. If not controlled, chronic high blood sugars can be hard on the eyes, feet and kidneys and cause permanent damage to those and other organs. Besides this, diabetes can affect the heart and circula-



tion. People with diabetes have almost twice the risk of heart attack and stroke as people without diabetes. If you have diabetes and you do have a heart attack, you would have almost twice the risk of dying as someone without diabetes who had a heart attack.³

You can do a lot to prevent or delay diabetes. If you just had a baby in the past six weeks, check with your doctor to see how soon you can start these steps:

1. Reach and maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, lose 5 to 7 % of your current weight. For example, if you weigh 200 pounds, lose 10 to 14 pounds. Then check with your doctor to see if you should lose more.
2. Make healthy food choices. Include fruits, vege-

tables, whole grains, lean protein, low fat and fat free dairy. Eat less sodium, fats, added sugars and refined grains. Be active for at least 30 minutes, five days a week. Walking is a good choice. Take the kids with you in a stroller, wagon, or their bikes. Or, use exercise videos indoors during bad weather.

These action steps are good for the entire family and help you and your baby manage the risks associated with developing diabetes. Breastfeeding also helps protect against childhood obesity, which is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes. For mom, breastfeeding can also promote an earlier return to pre-pregnancy weight.

If you have a history of gestational diabetes, make sure your family doctor knows. If you already have diabetes, it is important to get your blood sugars under control before getting pregnant again. Your doctor and diabetes educator can help you with this.

If you already have diabetes, it is important to get the tools you need to manage it well. Visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/24966.htm> to find a diabetes education center in your area.

This article provided by Cardiovascular Health and Diabetes Section of the Indiana State Department of Health.

The Vital Link: Supporting a Breastfeeding Mother



Breastfeeding is one of the most natural and normal acts in which a new mother can engage with her newborn. It provides warmth, nutrition, engagement and constant opportunity for new mothers to learn about and bond with their new babies. However, just because breastfeeding is natural does not mean it comes naturally to a new mother and baby. Many women struggle the first few weeks before breastfeeding becomes well-established. It is vital that every new mother be surrounded by ample support during the first six weeks after her baby is born to ensure that breastfeeding is successful. There are many ways that you can help support a new breastfeeding mom in your life such as:

- Don't be embarrassed! Allow mom to nurse her newborn in front of you just like she would if she were providing a bottle;
- Take on some responsibilities. Don't ask if mom needs help with dishes, laundry or child-care, just assume she does and offer to lend a hand.
- Be a resource, not a barrier. If mom is getting frustrated or overwhelmed with nursing, help her connect to a lactation consultant, the Women, Infants and Children program or the La Leche League for help instead of encouraging her to stop nursing;
- Know that breast is best. Many people are unaware of the current recommendations for nursing moms and babies and mistakenly give incorrect advice. Take a breastfeeding class with mom to learn.
- Build the right environment. Set up a nursing station next to the mother's favorite nursing chair. Water is a must, but you may also include reading material, clean cloth diapers (for burps), TV remote, radio and/or telephone.

For more information on breastfeeding support and resources, please visit the Indiana State Department of Health's Maternal and Child Health Division's webpage at <http://bit.ly/1y5AFmx>. Health professionals can refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies at <http://1.usa.gov/1sLM3H6>.

Did you Know?

- Research suggests that breastfed babies have lower risks of: asthma, childhood leukemia, childhood obesity, ear infections, eczema, diarrhea and vomiting, lower respiratory infections, necrotizing enterocolitis (a disease that affects the gastrointestinal tract in pre-term infants), Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and Type 2 diabetes.⁴
- Breastfeeding decreases the risk of certain cancers, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis for moms.
- Nearly three-quarters of new Hoosier moms choose to nurse their newborns.
- In Indiana, the law permits a woman to breastfeed her child anywhere she is legally allowed to be.⁵



Spotlight on Women's Health: Women, Infants and Children Program



The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program is one of the best assets for moms-to-be and new moms across the state. The Indiana WIC program currently serves an aver-

age of 167,877 women, infants and children each month through a statewide network of 145 WIC clinics. Its services include not only food provision but also:

- Nutrition and health screening and assessment
- Nutrition education and counseling
- Breastfeeding promotion and support
- Referrals to other Indiana health, family and social ser-

vices.

WIC's community-based approach helps women reach their health and breastfeeding goals where they are and allows for convenient access to services that women need.

For questions regarding the WIC program, visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/19691.htm>. You can also call 1-800-522-0874, or email inwic@isdh.in.gov.

How Do you Define Health?

For most women, the search for good health can be a difficult one, with different media messages, magazines and health articles pointing us in multiple directions. In 2011, more than half of the women in our state perceive their health to be less than optimal.⁶ Provided are some reliable, accurate resources that you can use to make better decisions about

your own health.

- www.inshapeindiana.org - INShape Indiana is a local resource that motivates, educates, and connects you to valuable resources that help you eat better, move more and avoid tobacco.
- www.womenshealth.gov - This is a comprehensive, national resource that covers all health topics for women from A-Z.

- www.quitnowindiana.com - If you are wanting to stop using tobacco products, this resource connects you with a Web Coach, a Text2Quit program or the telephone quit line.

Take the lead, feel empowered, be involved and don't sit back and let someone else define your health for you.

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Don't Let Menopause Give you Pause

While the symptoms of menopause can be uncomfortable, this normal life change can be an empowering experience for women. There is no better time to evaluate your health behaviors and make positive changes to improve how you feel, reduce unpleasant menopause symptoms and diminish the chances of serious health concerns down the road. Check out these tips to help make the transition through menopause a more positive experience:

- Practice bone-strengthening exercises: Weight-bearing, strength training and balance exercises can help prevent fractures and injury.
- Manage your diet and exercise: Weight gain is not inevitable in menopause, but it takes diligence to keep active and eat right.
- Establish healthy sleep: Follow a regular sleep schedule, avoid heavy evening meals, keep the bedroom comfortable, lower the lights, and avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine.
- Practice good oral hygiene: Brush and floss daily and visit your dentist every six months.
- Live a heart-healthy lifestyle: Reduce stress and see your doctor regularly for routine screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and breast health.⁷

For more information on how to navigate through menopause more comfortably, visit <http://www.menopause.org/women>.





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Thank you for subscribing to the Office of Women's Health (OWH) Wellness Watch Newsletter. The Office of Women's Health wants to ensure that each woman in Indiana is aware of her own health status, risks and goals, and can achieve optimal health through access, education and advocacy.

For more information about OWH's programs and initiatives, please visit:
<http://www.in.gov/isdh/18061.htm>. Follow OWH on Twitter at [@inwomenshealth](https://twitter.com/inwomenshealth).

Upcoming Events

- **Alzheimer's Association – Greater Indiana Chapter Chocolate Sunday event**
November 16, 2014
http://www.alz.org/indiana/in_my_community_8683.asp
- **National Alliance on Mental Health Mental Health First Aid course**
November 18, 2014
<http://www.namiindiana.org/mental-health-first-aid>

To have your event listed in the OWH Wellness Watch Newsletter, please email Laura Chavez at lchavez@isdh.in.gov.

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