



Perinatal e-News

LA BEST BABIES NETWORK



Healthy Babies. Our Future.
Presented by First 5 LA



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www.LABestBabies.org

Issue #28

- [Screening Reduces Rates of Group B Strep](#)
- [California's Teen Birth Rate on the Rise](#)
- [2008 California Food Guide](#)
- [Pregnancy and Tooth Loss](#)

August is International/National Group B Strep Awareness Month

Recommended Screening Reduces Rates of Group B Strep

Occurrences of group B strep (GBS), a bacteria that causes serious illnesses and deaths in newborns, dropped by 27% in newborns from 2003-2005, according to a study published in the May 2008 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA).

The researchers attribute the decrease in newborn incidents to the 2002 revision of the [group B strep screening recommendations](#), which calls for prenatal screening of all pregnant women at 35-37 weeks gestation.

The study showed that group B strep occurrences:

- decreased in newborns (birth - 6 days) from 0.47 per 1,000 births in 1999-2001, to 0.34 per 1,000 births in 2003-2005
- remained stable in infants ages 7 - 89 days and pregnant women
- increased among adults (15 - 64 years of age) from 3.4 per 100,000 population in 1999, to 5.0 per 100,000 in 2005.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 25% of pregnant women carry group B strep. Although the bacterial infection is rarely serious in adults, it may cause preterm birth, as well as [sepsis](#), pneumonia, meningitis and death in newborns. The increase of group B strep among adults underscores the need for developing a vaccine to target the disease in women of reproductive age.

In observing the month of July as **International/National Group B Strep Awareness Month**, LA Best Babies Network recommends that all pregnant women be tested for

group B strep at 35 - 37 weeks gestation.

Learn more:

For information on group B strep, visit www.groupbstrepinternational.org

California's Teen Birth Rate on the Rise

California's teen birth rate rose to 37.8 births per 1,000 teens in 2006, according to a report released by the Public Health Institute. By comparison, in 2005, the teen birth rate was 37.2 births per 1,000 teens. Although the change is minor, this is the first increase of California's teen birth rate in 15 years.

The Public Health Institute reports that in 2006 there were a total of 52,770 births to adolescent girls, 2,337 more births than in 2005. Some factors attributed to the increase in the teen birth rate include:

- increase in poverty rate
- growing teen population
- funding cuts to sexual education programs.

While California's teen birth rate is below the nation's average of 41.9 births per 1,000 teens, the investment in multilevel preventive programs and/or services are still needed.

The Public Health Institute offered the following recommendations to prevent teen births.

1. Bring California's elected officials, parents, teens and community stakeholders together to address teen pregnancy.
2. Maintain funding for programs directed to prevent teen pregnancy, births and/or sexual transmitted diseases.
3. Require public funded entities to provide sexual health education, support and/or publicize the implementation and/or compliance of such education.
4. Provide parent sexual education classes to communicate effectively with adolescents.

In our efforts to prevent teen pregnancy, LA Best Babies Network's SPA 4 Healthy Births Learning Collaborative (HBLC) incorporated teen pregnancy prevention into their 2007-2008 action plans. The SPA 4 HBLC created a pocket-

sized teen resource guide that promoted the services and resources available for teens in SPA 4. Currently, they are promoting their poster contest, where teens were invited to create a poster that addressed teen pregnancy prevention.

Learn more:

View the report "[No Time for Complacency, Teen Births in California.](#)"

2008 California Food Guide Released

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) released their 2008 California Food Guide. Targeted to healthcare providers and caregivers, the guide consists of the 2005 federal dietary guidelines and nutritional recommendations. It is designed to encourage individuals to make healthier eating choices and increase their physical activity.

The guide "California Food Guide: Fulfilling the Dietary Guidelines for Americans," is an update to the 1990 edition. It compiles the distinct nutritional needs of specific populations such as:

- children and adolescents
- pregnant and breastfeeding women
- racial and ethnic groups
- low-income individuals
- vegetarians

To access the "California Food Guide: Fulfilling the Dietary Guidelines for Americans," visit www.cafoodguide.ca.gov.

Correlation found Between Pregnancy and Tooth Loss

Women may experience tooth loss after pregnancy, regardless of their socio-economic status, according to a study published in the June issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. The researchers found that women with more than one child are more likely to be missing more teeth.

Women ages 18-64 of various socio-economic backgrounds were studied. The results showed that among the high income group, women with:

- no children were missing less than one tooth
- one child were missing at least one tooth
- four or more children were missing an average of five teeth.

Among the lower income group, women with:

- no children were missing two teeth
- one child were missing at least three teeth
- four or more children were missing more than eight teeth.

The researchers attribute tooth loss to various conditions such as:

- high cost of dental care
- concern over radiation exposure due to oral X-rays.

Also, pregnant women are more likely to develop plaque and gingivitis, a condition that causes bleeding and inflammation, and makes it more difficult to maintain proper oral hygiene.

Maintaining good oral health promotes the health of both the expectant mother and her unborn child. LA Best Babies Network recommends that healthcare providers:

- **Ask** - During the preconception visit (or as early as possible during prenatal care), ask all women if they have a regular dentist and if they have seen a dentist in the past year.
- **Advise** - Recommend oral hygiene routines, use of antimicrobial mouth rinse and regular dental examinations for all pregnant women.
- **Assess** - Inspect the mouths of all pregnant women for swollen or bleeding gums; irritation; discolored, broken and missing teeth; and visible tooth decay. Refer to appropriate dental care.
- **Assist** - Provide a referral for dental care to all pregnant women who have not seen a dentist within at least one year, and those with evidence to periodontal disease.
- **Arrange** - Provide office system reminders to promote follow-up on completion of dental referrals.

Learn more

View the Network's brief "[Periodontal Disease.](#)"

View the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health [fact sheet on oral health.](#)

Announcement

Apply for the CenteringPregnancy® Training

LA Best Babies Network invites you to apply for the CenteringPregnancy® Training to be held in October 2008. Five clinics will be selected to receive training to plan and implement the CenteringPregnancy® model of group prenatal care.

If you are interested in applying to participate in the training and later launch a CenteringPregnancy® group in your clinic/practice, please visit www.LABestBabies.org for details.

For more information, please contact Sandra Trinidad, MPH, RD, care quality program coordinator for LA Best Babies Network at (213) 250-7273, ext. 111 or STrinidad@LABestBabies.org.

Learn more:

View the press release "[March of Dimes Grant Awarded to LA Best Babies Network to Expand CenteringPregnancy® Model of Care in Southern California](#)"

Educational Event

Community Breastfeeding Celebration, August 11, 2008

August 11, 2008

"Community Breastfeeding Celebration"

California Hospital Medical Center, Keck Hall, 1401 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90012

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sponsored by PHFE-WIC and California Hospital Medical Center

LA Best Babies Network will have a booth at this event to highlight the work of the Network and showcase our "[Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Policies](#)" brochure.

Visit our Web [News & Events](#) section.

We invite you to contribute story ideas and event listings for our consideration in *Perinatal e-News*. To submit items please e-mail contact@labestbabies.org.

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