



# Perinatal e-News

LA BEST BABIES NETWORK



Healthy Babies. Our Future.  
Presented by First 5 LA



February 25, 2009  
[www.LABestBabies.org](http://www.LABestBabies.org)

Issue #38

## Preventing Infections During Pregnancy

\*\*\*\*\*

February is International  
Prenatal Infection Prevention  
Month

\*\*\*\*\*

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](mailto:contact@labestbabies.org).

### Preventing Infections During Pregnancy

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises women to consider immunization before conception (rather than during pregnancy) to optimize the health of mother and baby. Examples of immunizations include the rubella vaccine that prevents rubella, a viral disease which causes serious damage to the unborn fetus. The varicella vaccine that prevents chickenpox, a disease that can cause birth defects in the fetus and fatal pneumonia in the mother. A tetanus shot for the woman will prevent her baby from getting tetanus, a fatal disease of the central nervous system.

Maintaining current immunization histories is one strategy to decrease the risk of infection from viral infections such as rubella and measles during pregnancy. Women and their healthcare providers can take steps to minimize the chances of developing potentially harmful infections by monitoring and maintaining current immunization histories.

The CDC recommends that women who will be pregnant during the influenza season receive a flu shot. Pregnancy can increase a woman's risk for serious complications from the flu, such as pneumonia.

Women should avoid certain vaccines during pregnancy because they may cause harm to the mother and the fetus. Healthcare providers and women may obtain information about recommended immunizations before and during pregnancy by visiting Web sites such as the [March of Dimes](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

The March of Dimes recommends that women who are thinking of having a baby see their healthcare provider for the screening and treatment of sexually transmitted infections and common vaginal or urinary tract infections before conception to help prevent premature birth, a leading cause of infant death and disability.

To reduce a woman's chances of becoming infected with potentially harmful illnesses, the March of Dimes recommends the following:

#### Things to avoid

- Raw or uncooked meat
- Emptying cat litter
- Wild or pet rodents and their droppings
- Sharing food or drink with other people
- Unpasteurized milk and soft cheeses like feta and "queso fresco"

#### Things to do

- Frequent hand washing
- Preconception testing for sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, Hepatitis B, syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia
- Using "safe sex" practices to protect oneself from acquiring sexually transmitted infections
- Staying current with vaccinations (rubella, varicella, tetanus)

**How the Network is Making a Difference**

The Network's Healthy Births Care Quality Collaborative supports clinical practices to learn and implement strategies and skills to change the healthcare system so it supports the delivery of evidence-based clinical care. The Network supports healthcare providers in developing and implementing best practices pertaining to the risk assessment, screening and interventions for perinatal infections. Read about the strategies employed by the [Healthy Births Care Quality Collaborative](#).

#### **Learn More**

For more information on HIV, women can visit their regular doctor or prenatal care provider for an HIV test. They also can visit the [National HIV Testing Resources Web site](#) or call CDC-INFO 24 hours a day at 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636), 1-888-232-6348 (TTY), in English and Spanish.

#### [Preventing Infections During Pregnancy](#)

["Pregnant or Thinking About Getting Pregnant?" flyer on infection prevention tips](#)

#### [Infections and Pregnancy](#)

["Are You pregnant? Protect your baby from group B strep!" brochure](#)

To learn more about preventing infection, visit [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/pregnancy\\_gateway/infection.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/pregnancy_gateway/infection.htm). If women think they might have an infection or think they are at risk, they need to see their doctor. This is not a complete guide to a healthy pregnancy. Women should talk with their doctor to learn more about safe food preparation, wearing insect repellent when outside, taking medicine and other important topics.

View the Network's ["Healthy Families" site](#).

---

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

#### **Forward email**

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to saguilar@labestbabies.org by [contact@labestbabies.org](mailto:contact@labestbabies.org).  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



LA Best Babies Network | 350 South Bixel St., Suite 100 | Los Angeles | CA | 90017