

MOTHERS AND BABIES

Keeping Mom And Child Healthy After Gestational Diabetes

(NAPSA)—Gestational diabetes is something to be concerned about *after* and not just *during* pregnancy. Gestational diabetes is diabetes that is found for the first time when a woman is pregnant. If you had gestational diabetes when you were pregnant, you and your child from that pregnancy have a lifelong risk for developing diabetes, a serious disease that can lead to health problems such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease and amputations. The good news is there are steps you can take to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes and lower that risk for you and your child.

Get Tested for Diabetes

Most of the time, gestational diabetes goes away after the baby is born. However, an estimated half of all women who had gestational diabetes will go on to develop type 2 diabetes later in life. If you had gestational diabetes, it is important to get tested for diabetes within 12 weeks after your baby is born, and at least every three years after that.

Talk to Your Doctor—and Your Child's Doctor

Talk with your doctor if you plan on becoming pregnant again because you have a higher chance of developing gestational diabetes again during future pregnancies.

It's also important to know that any child you give birth to while having gestational diabetes is at risk for obesity and type 2 diabetes later in life. So tell your child's health care provider that you had gestational diabetes while you were pregnant. This is an important part of your child's health history and can alert your health care provider to monitor growth charts more closely.



Keep up healthy habits—even after the baby is born.

Other Steps to Take to Stay Healthy

Here are some additional steps women with a history of gestational diabetes can take to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes, and to help their children stay healthy, too:

- Try to reach your pre-pregnancy weight six to 12 months after your baby is born. Even if you do not reach your goal weight, maintaining a healthy lifestyle can help reduce the diabetes risk.
- Make healthy food choices for you and your children. Choose foods that are lower in fat and calories and high in fiber. For example, choose lean meats, chicken and turkey with the skin removed and fish. Drink water instead of juice or sweetened soda.
- Be more active each day. Try to get at least 30 minutes of activity, five days a week. It's okay to be active for 10 minutes at a time, three times a day. Do this as a family!

Learn More

For more information about gestational diabetes, visit the NIDDK website at www.niddk.nih.gov.