

# Women of Color Pregnancy Wellness Program

Recommendations for Women of Color to Have  
a Healthy Pregnancy and a Healthy Baby



Developed and funded by the Healthy Pregnancy Summit

A woman with curly hair is smiling and looking down at a baby she is holding. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing text.

# welcome

## Women of Color Pregnancy Wellness Program

At the Healthy Pregnancy Summit, we are dedicated to empowering Black mothers with the knowledge and resources necessary for achieving healthy, full-term pregnancies. Historically, Black women experienced healthier pregnancy outcomes in the 1960s and 1970s, a testament to the importance of community support informed healthcare practices and better nutrition.

Today, we recognize that the time is now to reclaim that legacy. By prioritizing regular medical check-ups before and during pregnancy, Black mothers can take proactive steps towards ensuring their own health and the health of their babies. The Healthy Pregnancy Summit offers invaluable insights into practices that can significantly increase the odds of a full-term pregnancy without complications.

Together, we can pave the way for healthier futures. It's time to take action and educate Black mothers on the vital steps needed to improve pregnancy outcomes.

**Join us in this important program, and let's work towards a healthier tomorrow for our families and communities.**

Proactively doing everything possible to increase the odds of a healthy, full-term pregnancy are well worth the time and effort. Did you know that complications in pregnancy have an increased societal cost? [Click here to learn more](#) and [here](#).



## Women of Color Pregnancy Wellness Program

### 1 Health Insurance

Having health insurance before and during pregnancy is crucial for accessing the necessary healthcare services. It provides coverage for essential prenatal care, screenings, and any potential complications, ensuring that mothers receive the best possible support throughout their pregnancy journey. Without insurance, many Black moms may hesitate to seek the care they need, which can lead to adverse outcomes for both mother and baby.

To explore affordable health insurance options, visit [Healthcare.org](https://www.healthcare.org). This resource offers information on plans that can fit various budgets and needs, helping you make informed decisions for your health and the health of your baby.

### 2 OB/GYN Visits

Regular visits to an OB/GYN are vital for monitoring the health of both the mother and the developing baby. These appointments allow for important screenings, discussions about lifestyle choices, and timely interventions if any issues arise. Early and consistent prenatal care can dramatically reduce the risk of complications and support a healthy pregnancy.

We encourage all expectant mothers to schedule their OB/GYN appointments as early as possible. Establishing care with a trusted healthcare provider lays the foundation for a supportive and informed pregnancy experience. Don't wait—taking this step now is crucial for a healthier tomorrow.

**We recommend checking your health insurance to make sure your OB/GYN and the hospital where he or she performs deliveries are in your insurance network since it is possible that one or the other may not be.**



### ③ Nourishing Your Body: The Importance of Healthy Eating

Maintaining a balanced diet is essential for pregnant mothers, particularly for Black mothers who are seeking to optimize their health during pregnancy. Avoiding junk food and processed foods can significantly impact maternal and fetal well-being. These foods often lack vital nutrients and can lead to complications such as gestational diabetes, excessive weight gain or going into premature labor.

At the Healthy Pregnancy Summit, we understand the challenges many face in preparing nutritious meals. That's why we focus on practical strategies to help you cook healthy, affordable meals that fit into your busy life. Our engaging sessions, including the popular Slow Cooker Pregnancy Talk (including easy-to-follow recipe books), provide simple recipes and meal ideas that make it easy to nourish yourself and your growing baby while maintaining a budget.



**Choosing whole, nutrient-rich, organic foods over processed options not only supports your health but also increases the odds of a healthy, full-term pregnancy.**

**Join us in embracing better eating habits for a brighter future!**



#### ④ Why Nutrition Matters for Black Women: Preventing Pre-Term Labor

Black women are at a higher risk of experiencing pre-term labor, which can lead to various health complications for both the mother and the baby. It is crucial to take proactive steps in improving nutrition to increase the chances of a full-term pregnancy. One simple yet effective change is to avoid diet soda, which often contains aspartame.

##### **Step 1: Avoid Diet Soda Before and During the Pregnancy: A Risk Factor for Pre-Term Birth**

Aspartame, a common artificial sweetener found in many diet sodas, has been linked to an increased risk of pre-term birth. According to a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, the consumption of aspartame was associated with a higher incidence of pre-term labor. You can read more about this study [here](#).

### Take Action for a Healthier Pregnancy

By making informed choices about what you consume, you can significantly impact the health and well-being of your pregnancy. Eliminating diet soda and other sources of aspartame from your diet is a positive step toward reducing the risk of pre-term labor.

On the next page, you'll find more valuable information on how Black mothers can increase the odds of a full-term pregnancy.



## ④ Why Nutrition Matters for Black Women: Preventing Pre-Term Labor

### Step 2: Understand The Vital Role of Vitamin D for Black Mothers

Vitamin D is essential for a healthy pregnancy, yet many Black women face challenges in maintaining adequate levels of this crucial nutrient. Women with darker complexions, including Black women, have a more difficult time synthesizing vitamin D from sunlight. This deficiency is more prevalent in Black women and has been linked to premature birth and miscarriage by numerous scientific studies.

#### Why Vitamin D Matters

Vitamin D plays a vital role in supporting a healthy pregnancy. Deficiencies in vitamin D have been associated with an increased risk of premature birth. Ensuring sufficient levels of this nutrient can help reduce this risk and promote a full-term pregnancy for Black mothers.

#### How to Boost Your Vitamin D Levels

To improve vitamin D levels, we recommend:

- **Sun Exposure:** Aim for 15-20 minutes of direct sun exposure daily without sunscreen. While sunscreen is important for skin protection, it also inhibits the body's ability to synthesize vitamin D.
- **Supplements:** Consider taking a vitamin D supplement to ensure you are meeting your daily requirements.

## Attend the Healthy Pregnancy Summit

For more information on the importance of vitamin D, attend the Healthy Pregnancy Summit. There is a dedicated session on this topic, providing valuable insights and practical tips for maintaining optimal vitamin D levels during pregnancy.

#### Research Links Vitamin D Deficiency to Miscarriage

Interested in reading the research that supports maintaining vitamin D? Check out [this study](#).



### Step 3: Understanding The Importance of Iron for Black Mothers During Pregnancy

Anemia, a condition characterized by a lack of sufficient iron in the blood, is more common among Black mothers. This deficiency is linked to various pregnancy complications, making it crucial for women of color to maintain adequate iron levels during pregnancy.

#### Understanding Anemia

Anemia occurs when the body doesn't have enough iron to produce healthy red blood cells. These cells are responsible for carrying oxygen throughout the body. During pregnancy, sufficient iron is essential for the health of both the mother and the developing baby.

#### Why Iron is Critical

Iron plays a vital role in carrying oxygen, which is absolutely critical to the health of the baby's developing brain. Without enough iron, the baby may not receive the oxygen needed for proper brain development and overall growth.

#### Testing and Supplementation

Given the increased risk of anemia among Black mothers, it is essential to:

- **Test for Iron Deficiency:** Regularly check your iron levels to ensure they are within a healthy range.
- **Take an Iron Supplement:** Under all circumstances, Black mothers should consider taking an iron supplement to correct any deficiency. This can help reduce the risk of pregnancy complications and is highly beneficial for the developing fetus.

We recommend beginning preconception if possible taking a blood test to measure potential iron deficiency.

By addressing iron deficiency, you can significantly improve your pregnancy outcomes and support the healthy development of your baby. Taking these steps is not only important for reducing the risk of complications but also for ensuring the best possible start for your new born baby.



#### **Step 4: The Importance of High-Quality Prenatal Supplements for Women of Color**

Ensuring a healthy pregnancy starts with proper nutrition, and for women of color, this often means addressing critical mineral deficiencies that are more prevalent in our communities. One of the most effective ways to do this is by taking a high-quality prenatal supplement.

#### **Why Take a Prenatal Supplement?**

A high-quality prenatal supplement is designed to provide essential vitamins and minerals that support both the mother and the developing baby. These supplements can help correct deficiencies in crucial nutrients such as iron, vitamin D, folic acid, and calcium, all of which are vital for a healthy pregnancy.

#### **The Role of Health Insurance and Regular Checkups**

Access to health insurance and regular visits to an OB/GYN are fundamental for ensuring that you receive the care and guidance needed before and during pregnancy. Your healthcare provider can help you choose the best prenatal supplement and monitor your nutrient levels to ensure you and your baby are getting the necessary support.

#### **Steps to Take:**

- **Choose a High-Quality Prenatal Supplement:** Look for supplements that contain the full spectrum of essential vitamins and minerals.
- **Regular OB/GYN Visits:** Schedule and attend regular checkups with your OB/GYN to monitor your health and nutrient levels throughout your pregnancy.
- **Utilize Health Insurance:** Make sure you have health insurance coverage to access prenatal care and supplements.

**By taking these proactive steps, you can address and correct critical mineral deficiencies, supporting a healthier pregnancy and a better start for your baby.**



## Step 5: Understanding The Critical Role of Folate for a Healthy Pregnancy

Folate, a B-vitamin essential for cell growth and metabolism, plays a crucial role in ensuring a full-term pregnancy and a healthy baby. Maintaining healthy levels of folate has been linked to increased odds of a successful pregnancy outcome.

### Folate vs. Folic Acid

Many prenatal supplements contain folic acid, but it is important to note that folate is the form your body needs. The body must first convert folic acid into folate before it can be absorbed and utilized effectively. This conversion process can be inefficient, making it crucial to choose supplements that provide folate directly.

### Taking Action for Optimal Folate Levels

To ensure adequate folate levels during pregnancy:

- Choose the Right Supplement: Select a prenatal vitamin that contains folate instead of folic acid. This ensures your body receives the nutrient in the form it can use immediately.
- Consume Folate-Rich Foods: Incorporate organic fruits and vegetables rich in folate into your diet. Some excellent sources include leafy greens, citrus fruits, beans, and whole grains.

### Benefits of Adequate Folate

Maintaining sufficient folate levels is associated with:

- Reduced risk of birth defects, particularly neural tube defects.
- Increased chances of a full-term pregnancy.
- Enhanced overall health of the developing baby.

**While consumption of folate is important during all stages of the pregnancy, it is especially crucial that folate is taken if at all possible beginning preconception into the first trimester of pregnancy.**



Only  
\$37

## Healthy Pregnancy Summit - VIP Pass Benefits:

For only \$37 for you will gain full access to a wealth of practical and useful tips:

- Over 35 pregnancy talks, plus the accompanying transcripts and notes
- **PregnancyKitchen.org** includes meal planning and recipes that support you and your baby's nutritional needs
- *The Healthy Child Guide*, a 50-page summary full of tips for increasing your chance of birthing a child free of chronic health conditions
- We offer Healthy Pregnancy Summit VIP Scholarships to those who cannot afford the VIP Pass. Also, the Summit is FREE to attend on December 5-7, 2024. Please email us at [Education@NeurologicalHealth.org](mailto:Education@NeurologicalHealth.org) if you have any further questions.

*The Healthy Child Guide* is a colorful 50-page summary of the most current, scientifically-based findings for having a healthy pregnancy and increasing your chance of birthing a child free of chronic health conditions. Written by over 20 medical, scientific and health experts in prenatal health, nutrition, and toxicology, the guide outlines 17 easy-to-follow recommendations that science tells us are the keys to unlocking your child's full neurological potential.



Register TODAY to attend the Healthy Pregnancy Summit:  
[HealthyPregnancySummit.com](http://HealthyPregnancySummit.com)

