



THE FIRST THOUSAND DAYS AND OUR HEALTH

Scientific studies show which care in the first 1000 days of life can affect the health of a person forever.

$$\begin{array}{r} 270 \text{ days (9 months of pregnancy)} \\ + 365 \text{ days (first year of life)} \\ + 365 \text{ days (second year of life)} \\ \hline 1000 \text{ days} \end{array}$$

Check out at the back of this card how the first care can make a difference in the life of your son or daughter.

To learn more about Pastoral Care for Children and their activities talk with our community leader. All information contained in this material are also available online.

www.pci.org.br

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270 days (9 months of pregnancy)

Possible Problems

- Babies with delayed growth in the womb or were born with low weight (less than 2.5 kg). They present more risks of developing diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, kidney and heart diseases when adults.
- Children born two weeks prematurely have 120 more chances of developing respiratory problems.
- Cesareans cause four times more infections postpartum and three times more diseases and maternal deaths.

How to care for

- Prenatal care during the entire pregnancy in a health center, with special attention for the poor pregnant women above 30 years old.
- Avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- Healthy food.
- Monitor the pregnancy until the end of her gestation and have normal childbirth.

365 days + 365 days (1st and 2nd year of life)

Possible Problems

- 1st year old: children who breastfed are having less high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity in adolescence and adulthood.
- Children of two years old who are undernourished, have more risk to develop diabetes when adults.

How to care for

- Breastfeeding.
- Healthy food.
- Good hygiene habits.
- Vaccines.
- Affection, attention, conversations and opportunities to play.



THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF PREGNANCY

How did you and your spouse (partner) feel when you learned that you were pregnant? Were you happy, anxious, or worried?

Regardless of the situation, how do you feel about discussing/sharing your feelings with a friend?

**You are a rich fountain of God's love!
Your womb should to be a temple of health,
love and peace for the baby.**

Hi Mom! I'm still a very small creature, but I'm happy to be here in your womb! My heart is beating, making the blood circulate through my body. It is important that you take care of me, that you give me proper nourishment, so that I will develop well and be born healthy, with proper weight. Ok?

It is common for the pregnant woman to have mood swings, from feeling happy to feeling sad momentarily. She may have the urge to cry and to feel anxious. This occurs due to hormonal changes in her body. Through the months, these feelings gradually become stabilized.

You may feel weak and faint when you change your position abruptly, or when you refrain from eating for a long time. You must eat as often as possible each day and always take a rest whenever possible.

In the early months of pregnancy, dizziness, as well as the urge to throw up (vomiting) is a common feeling. In order to avoid this, you must eat dry bread or a piece of biscuit (or cracker) in the morning and avoid eating oily and spicy foods.

As Leader of the Pastoral Care for Children, you can always count on me: I will listen to you and will share with you whatever I know.

Go to the Health Center soon, for your PRENATAL CHECK-UP.





THE PRENATAL CHECK-UP • WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Mommy, taking care of your health means you are also taking care of my health. You will be in good health and I shall be born healthy and strong!

You are more enlightened now, as you carry a new life in your womb!

The Prenatal period consists of giving medical attention to yourself, as a pregnant woman. During this time, you will receive instructions on how to safeguard your health and that of your baby.

A minimum of four prenatal consultations (or check-ups) is needed in a safe pregnancy. In a pregnancy at risk, some problem or illness may occur that can complicate the period of gestation.

Dates for the prenatal consultations will depend on your stage of pregnancy before the prenatal check-up starts. At least two of the pre-natal consultations are made with the doctor, the other can be with the midwife.

You must receive the Card (ID, Booklet) for the Pregnant Woman during your first day of prenatal check-up. Always bring your card everytime you go to the Health Center, because everything that transpires during your pregnancy must be recorded in it. This will provide you with better medical care.

During the prenatal consultations, you will:

- Know about your health condition;
- Know how the baby is growing;
- Know more or less when the baby will be born;
- Know how provide yourself with the best nourishment and how you should take care of yourself too;
- Examine your breasts for any lumps, and undergo preventive test for cancer of the cervix, if you had your last test taken more than a year ago;
- Receive ferrous (iron) sulphate to prevent anemia;
- Be properly oriented before you receive anti-tetanus vaccine, if you have not received the complete dosage.

Mother's health and that of the baby depend on a good prenatal care.



DANGER SIGNS - FOR THE PREGNANT WOMAN

Proceed to the hospital immediately, if any of these signs appears.



You vomit everything
you eat or drink



Swelling of the
legs and arms



Starting from the 7th
month of pregnancy,
please observe:

**If the baby is not
moving or if
he/she is too
excited or agitated.**



High fever/
headache



Bleeding



Liquid loss

Two kinds of illnesses may be problematic to the health of the pregnant woman and that of the baby. One of them is URINARY TRACT INFECTION, which, if not treated on time, may lead to kidney infection, abortion and pre-mature birth.

In order to prevent this, drink plenty of liquids, and make sure you pass off the urine anytime you feel like emptying your bladder.

Another illness during pregnancy is ECLAMPSIA. This type of illness gives you headache and causes swelling of the face, hands and feet. If this occurs, proceed immediately to the hospital and explain everything that you feel.

Once these illnesses are treated immediately, pregnancy may continue until its complete term without any major complications.

Although most of the pregnancies are safe, it is always good to know where to go, at the sign of any problem. You may inquire about this during the prenatal consultation.

Talk to your family, friends and neighbours to find out who can help you in case any problem arises, and how get to the hospital the soonest possible time.



THE 4th, 5th AND 6th MONTH OF PREGNANCY

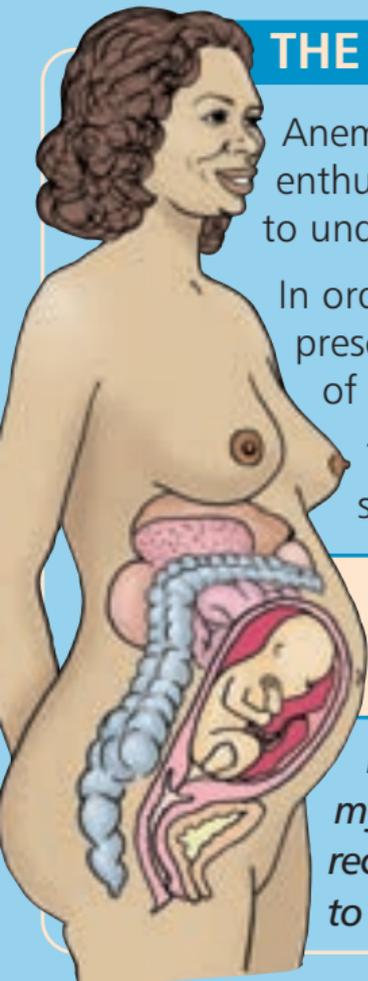
Anemia is a common illness during pregnancy. It causes fatigue, lack of enthusiasm to do things and lack of appetite. Anemia in the baby leads to underweight and debility at birth.

In order to prevent this, you must take iron sulphate that the doctor prescribes during the prenatal consultation, aside from having a regimen of healthy food.

To avoid gases, stomach burns and indigestion (poor digestion), eat slowly and chew your food well.

The affection that the baby receives in the mother's womb is a sign of God's sweetness, gentleness and profound love!

Hi Mommy! Now I can move, I can open and close my eyes, move my hands, kick, suck my fingers, do some movements. Now I recognize your voice, and that of Daddy's. I like it when you talk to me and I feel it when you caress me in Mommy's womb.



It is common to have swollen feet and varicose veins on the legs. This occurs because the uterus keeps on expanding, putting pressure on some veins in the stomach, making difficult the return flow of blood from the legs toward the heart.

To reduce the swelling, walk a lot (be mobile) and avoid being seated or lying down for a long time. When you lie down, place a support underneath your legs to elevate them a little.

Take good care of your teeth! Avoid eating sweets to prevent tooth decay or any problem of the gums. Brush your teeth, your tongue and gums after every meal and use dental floss at least once a day.

Because of the hormones produced during pregnancy, bleeding of gums is a common occurrence. Even if this happens, always keep your mouth clean and consult the dentist from the Health Center.

You may use as dental floss a sewing thread that is thick enough, or very fine strips from milk packages or plastic.





NOURISHMENT OF THE PREGNANT WOMAN

Hi Mommy! I keep on growing and getting fat. Thanks for taking care of me! I can't wait for the time to be so close to you, to be caressed and be loved!

**Vous You are full of "grace"!
You are the light of the Lord that comes from within you.**

You must have a healthy diet, with little sugar and salt, rich in iron, Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Iodine and Calcium in order to stay healthy, and for the baby to grow and be born with the right weight.

Iron helps to prevent anemia. It is found in all kinds of meat, giblets/innards (internal organs), dry beans, together with green beans, dried fruits, cashew nuts and peanuts. The iron found in these foods is best utilized when eaten together with foods rich in Vitamin C and A found in the same.

Drinking coffee, tea leaves, black tea. milk, soft drinks or chocolate products before lunch or dinner diminishes the beneficial effects of iron taken from these foods, on our body.

Vitamin C helps to heal the wounds and to avoid infections and bleeding. It is found in fruits and raw vegetables.

Vitamin A helps to prevent diarrhea and infections, protects one's vision and helps in the development of the baby in the womb. It is found in red and orange-colored vegetables, green leafy vegetables, yellow fruits and palm fruits, milk, cheese and egg yolks.

Iodine is important to the growth of the baby. It is found in fish, seafoods and table salt (iodized).

Calcium helps in developing and maintaining strong teeth and bones. It is found in milk, cheese, yogurt, green leafy vegetables, sesame seeds and small fish.

A varied diet, rich in vegetables, garden produce and fruits, is very nutritious since it contains more vitamins and minerals.





ALCOHOL AND DRUGS: THE MORE YOU AVOID THEM, THE BETTER!

Hi Mommy! I love you very much and I feel you love me too. Don't do anything that may be bad for our health and happiness, ok? I will need your strength and you will be my model in this life so that I will become a good person.

**Motherhood is God's most profound experience as Creator!
To be a mother is to perpetuate God's work!**

Tobacco and alcohol, although they are not prohibited by law, are drugs that bring serious problems to the pregnant woman and the baby.

Tobacco increases the chances of abortion and bleeding. The baby may be born underweight or prematurely, and he/she may have breathing problems, heart problems, or it (tobacco) may even cause his/her sudden death.



If the woman takes alcoholic drinks during her pregnancy, she runs the risk of having an abortion. The baby may be born underweight, aside from having tremors and he/she may be more irritated (or restless), may suck less milk and sleep badly.

Babies who are greatly affected by alcohol and who survive the first few days of life, may be afflicted with physical and mental problems.

When the pregnant woman is into drugs like marijuana, cocaine, crack and others, she may have an abortion or premature birth.

As for the baby, these drugs may cause serious growth and breathing problems, as well as problems of the brain and heart.

Avoid paints, glue and solvents. These substances may adversely affect the mothers' health, as well as the baby's.

Some medications may likewise cause problems on the baby's growth while still in the womb. That is why, use medicines only with medical prescription and with the consent of the prenatal doctor!



THE 7th, 8th AND 9th MONTH OF PREGNANCY

Colostrum, which is yellowish milk, may start to appear from the mother's breast. This is normal. When the baby is born, this milk will provide him a real source of good health.

If you are engaged in heavy work and become too tired, the baby may be born prematurely. It is important that you get help from your partner and your family with respect to household chores or whenever and wherever necessary.

**Blessed is the fruit of your womb,
for it is the symbol of God's presence.**

Hi, Mommy! I am quite big now. I can open and close my eyes and my hands. Soon we shall be able to see each other! Relax, Mom, because everything will be ok.

Due to the weight of the stomach, hemorrhoids, which are varicose veins in the anus may appear. If you are constipated, these varicose veins may become worse.

For the intestine to function well, drink sufficient liquids, walk a lot, and eat the right food rich in fiber, such as green leafy vegetables (with stalks), fruits, oats, rye and other foodstuffs of the region.

Childbirth is an important event in the life of the mother, as well as the baby's. Worrying about the time of delivery and the baby's arrival (birth) may render her sleepless.

Discussing your concerns with your partner, with your family and friends, may help relieve you of this anxiety. As Leader of the Pastoral Care for Children, I also want to listen to you and your concerns (preoccupations)!

**Prior to the last month of your pregnancy,
discuss with your partner, relatives, friends or neighbors,
your confinement in the hospital or maternity clinic.**





LABOR SIGNS

Mommy, I am almost due to come! I can't wait for the time to be too close to you, to be in your arms and be loved by you, by Dad and by everyone in the family!

**Giving birth to a baby is showing the world
the loving face of the Creator!**

The signs that the baby is due may vary in every woman and from one pregnancy to another. If this is the first child, labor usually takes longer, and lasts longer.

Here are some signs that the baby is due:

- Pain originating from the back and leading to the lower part of the abdomen.
- Great loss of water passing through the vagina, when the water bag holding the baby breaks.
- Contractions occur when the abdomen hardens and suddenly softens. These contractions start slowly, then intensity with less interval between one and the other contraction.

If you live near the hospital or the maternity clinic, you can wait until the contractions occur every ten minutes.

If you live far, plan your trip earlier or stay in a place closer to where you want to have the baby born.

Make arrangements with a relative or a person known to you who can watch over your house and take care of your other children while you are away.

Don't forget to bring the following to the hospital:

- Your Pregnancy Card (ID, Booklet);
- Your Identification Card or Certificate or any other document;
- Some clothes for yourself and for the baby.

When the baby is born by normal delivery, he is more active and you recover faster. You resort to caesarian section only when necessary.





THE BIRTH OF THE BABY

Mommy and Daddy, I think everything is going to be different! I will be sucking milk from Mommy and keep warm in her arms, to make me feel better and get used to my new life out there!

The birth of a baby is God's miracle come true! Let this baby be the reason for peace and joy for the entire family!

After childbirth, if everything turns out well, the mother and the baby should stay together in the same room. This is called Rooming-In. In this manner, the baby can breastfeed from the mother whenever he wants and the mother can easily notice if there is anything wrong with the baby.

Breast milk is complete food. It has everything that the baby needs for growth development until he/she is six months old. It is the safest, the cheapest and the simplest way to feed the baby. It has the right mixture at an ideal temperature, and it comes out straight from the mother's breast to the baby's mouth.

The baby who feeds solely on mother's milk does not need to take tea, juice nor water. Aside from being well nourished, he/she will feel protected with the warmth of the mother's body held close to him/her.

The type of nipple and mammary glands will not cause any problems in nursing or feeding the baby. What is important is the manner by which the baby holds on to the mother's breast to suck milk.

To be able to suck milk well from the mother's breast, the baby must be awake. His/her mouth must grasp almost the entire nipple. The baby's lower lip must be turned on the outer side and his/her chin must be supported by the mother's mammary gland.

If you have difficulty in breastfeeding the baby, ask the help of the doctor or nurse as soon as possible.

**The baby who feeds solely on mother's breast has less chances of having diarrhea, pneumonia, allergies and pain in the ears.
There is no such thing as poor mother's milk!**





THE BABY'S FIRST WEEK OF LIFE

Mommy and Daddy! I need all your care and affection so that I will grow up happy and healthy! I will change your life completely. Together we shall learn how to live better each day.

**Happy is the womb that brought you and the breasts that fed you!
Mother, caring for your baby demands love and dedication.**

The baby has no fixed time for feeding. Let him suck milk whenever he/she wants to. When he/she does, look at your baby with affection, say gentle words to him, and caress him tenderly. He feels loved and protected in this manner.

When the baby is born prematurely or underweight, it is necessary to wake him up a number of times during the day and at night for him to suck milk more often. This will make him gain more weight soon.

At bath time, prepare everything that you will need. Check the water temperature before putting the baby in the tub.

To avoid irritations and rashes, change the diapers whenever they are wet. Clean the baby's behind and dry it well, as well as the body wrinkles or creases.

Cleaning and curing the umbilical cord/navel must be done every day, until it gets dry and falls off. At bathtime, don't be afraid to wash the umbilical cord with soap and water. Then, dry it well.

Apply a little alcohol (**70% alcohol**) on the umbilical cord. You can buy this at the pharmacy or you can get it at a Health Store.

Don't put a navel bandage or band on the baby since this makes breathing difficult for the baby and it prevents the umbilical cord from drying.

The baby needs the Birth Certificate to become a citizen!





Sleeping with the tummy up is safer!

It is possible to reduce
sudden deaths of babies
by more than 70%.

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Sleeping with the tummy up is safer!

It is possible to reduce sudden deaths of babies by more than 70%.

This is how:

- **Put your baby to sleep with his/her tummy up.**
- **Breastfeeding:** Only with the mother's milk until the sixth month.
- **Don't smoke and let no one smoke inside your house,** especially during pregnancy and in the presence of children.
- **Don't wrap him/her with many clothes.**
- **Put the pillows and cushions, toys , and other soft objects outside the crib.**

Ask your leader for further information

DANGER SIGNS FOR THE BABY UP TO 2 MONTHS OLD

Proceed to the hospital immediately if the baby shows any of these signs.



The baby does not hold fast to the mother's breast and does not suck milk for his/her food.



The baby gets weaker, is restless in his/her sleep and cries faintly



High fever.
(Temperature is higher than or equal to 38° Celsius)



Low temperature.
(Lower than or equal to 35° Celsius)

DANGER SIGNS FOR THE BABY UP TO 2 MONTHS OLD

Proceed to the hospital immediately if the baby shows any of these signs.



**Convulsion
Attacks**



Diarrhea



**Reddish
umbilical cord
or with pus**



**A lot of blisters
with pus all
over the body**



THE FIRST MONTH OF LIFE

Mommy, Daddy! I cry when I want to be held in your arms, when I am hungry, when I feel some pains, when I am cold or when I am wet. It's my way of letting you know what I feel. Gradually, you will better understand what my needs are!

To Mommy and Daddy! May your home provide this creature with all the love and happiness he deserves!

The presence and assistance of the partner and family members are of great importance to your tranquillity and that of the baby.

The father can not breastfeed the baby, but he can help you in other ways, like giving the baby a bath, preparing to feed him/her, taking him/her in his arms to burp (eructate), putting him/her to sleep and helping in fixing the house...

Try to relax whenever the baby is asleep, so that you can attend to him at the time he wakes up for his breastfeeding.

Taking the baby in your arms when he cries is not spoiling him/her. This is a sign of parental love and care which makes the baby feel more secure.

The best sleeping position for the baby is with his/her tummy up and his/her head a little elevated. In this manner, the baby can breathe better and avoids the risk of throwing up (vomiting).

It is good for the baby to take a little sunbath everyday, before 9:00 in the morning, or after 4:00 in the afternoon. Exposure to sun at this time is best for the health of the baby.

Don't forget to see the doctor for the baby's check-up.

Vaccinations

It is important to bring the baby to the Health Center to administer the right vaccines for his/her age.



DANGER SIGNS FOR THE BABY FROM 2 MONTHS TO 5 YEARS OLD

Proceed to the hospital immediately if the baby shows any of these signs.



Baby does not suck milk, nor take in liquids, nor eat anything



Baby is weak, with a faint cry or wails a lot



Convulsion attacks



Considerable loss of weight, paleness and swelling of the feet

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DANGER SIGNS FOR THE BABY FROM 2 MONTHS TO 5 YEARS OLD

Proceed to the hospital immediately if the baby shows any of these signs.

The baby has difficulty of breathing:



- Strange sound when breathing (shrill sound);
- Ribs structure becomes obvious when inhaling (subcostal marks)



The baby throws up everything

Proceed to the hospital immediately if the baby shows any of these signs



If the baby has diarrhea and becomes dehydrated:

- Pinch test
- Sunken eyes



THE BABY AT FOUR (4) TO FIVE (5) MONTHS OLD

Mommy and Daddy, I know you have a lot of things to do... but please find time to spend with me alone, to hug me, to talk to me and teach me how to play with my toys. I need your attention, care and love

**The Kingdom of God belongs to the children!
Jesus embraced the children, and taked to them.
Being a father and a mother is following the example of Jesus!**

Mother's milk continues to be the best food for the baby. If he feeds solely on mother's milk, he will naturally gain weight and become fat.

After four or five months of breastfeeding solely from the mother, the baby continues getting fat, but gradually. This is normal and it does not mean that he is getting poor milk.

If you need to go back to work, please discuss with me, your Leader in the Pastoral Care for Children, the matter of obtaining and keeping milk to be given to the baby while you are away, at work.

There are times when your baby cries when left alone. Find ways to perform your household chores with the baby near you, so that you can look at each other (maintain contact) and talk to him/her.

At this stage, it is good for the baby to have a fixed time for his bath, for his feeding and sleeping. He gets nervous and insecure with a lot of changes in his daily life.

After each breastfeeding, clean the baby's gums, inner cheeks and tongue with a clean and wet cloth. This removes milk residue and trains the baby to have a clean mouth.

Vaccinations

It is important to bring the baby to the Health Center to administer the right vaccine shots for his/her age.





THE BABY AT SIX (6) TO EIGHT (8) MONTHS OLD

Mommy, even if I eat the food that you prepare for me, I still need to be breastfed by you. This is how I become strong and healthy and I am happier being so close to you!

**Dear Parents! Be happy, be humble, be nice and patient.
Keep the ties of Peace in the family,
to sustain unity of the Spirit!**

The baby will now begin to try taking in other food, aside from the mother's milk. This requires much patience on the part of the mother and the person taking care of the baby. He/She should not be forced nor be whipped to make him/her eat. He/She must be relaxed to be able to eat well.

At the start, it is necessary to crush or mash the food, since the baby is still unable to chew. Each day, increase the amount of food that you give the baby.

When the baby spits out the food, it does not mean that he/she does not like it; he/she just finds it strange to take in something he/she is not familiar with. It is therefore necessary to give him/her the same food any time.

The baby's food should not be sweetened/sugar coated. Sugar is one of the principal causes of tooth decay.

Continue cleaning the baby's mouth with a clean cloth and start brushing the teeth that are beginning to come out, without using any toothpaste. This is mainly done before the baby goes to sleep.

If the baby has diarrhea, continue giving him/her food. You also give him/her homemade serum (suero casero) in small amounts, several times a day. This prevents dehydration, which means loss of too much liquid in the body.

Please consult me in case you have any doubts as to how to prepare homemade serum (suero casero, or if you need a measuring spoon).

Vaccinations

It is important to bring the baby to the Health Center to administer the right vaccine shots for his/her age.

