

# **EASY READING BROCHURE**

## **Having A Baby**

**An information brochure for adults  
with low English literacy**



**EASY READING**



Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research is a leading-edge, registered not-for-profit charitable research and service organization that has been building the capacity of persons with disabilities and enriching communities through leadership, innovation and collaboration since 1969. Affiliated with the University of Calgary we are recognized as a leader in the field of disability services and research.

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## What is an Easy Reading Brochure?

Plain language is a way of writing so that more people can understand the information. There are some things we do with plain language that you would not see out-side of plain language.

For example, words like understand and outside, used in the first paragraph, have a - in the middle. This helps to make a longer word that is made of more words, easier to read.

We also use things like square brackets and definitions:

### **Square Brackets** [ ]

Some-times you will see square brackets, like these [ ], beside a word. The letters between the brackets are there to help people learn how to say the word.

### **Definition Box**

Some words you see will have a box around the word like "Definition Box" to the left. Beside each box, there will be a paragraph that has an line around it, like this one. This is to help people learn what the word means.

**In 2009, there were  
380,863 babies born  
in Canada.**

- Statistics Canada

**You will learn about:** .....

..... **1 Who Can Get Pregnant?**

..... **2 Are You Pregnant?**

..... **3 What is it Like to be Pregnant?**

..... **4 What Happens When the Baby Comes?**

..... **R Resources**



**Women of all ages become pregnant and many find it hard to make a decision about what to do.**

- Canadian Federation for Sexual Health

## 1

**Who Can Get Pregnant?**

Most women who have sex can get pregnant [preg-nant].

Women can be:

- Young
- Old
- From all over the world
- Rich
- Poor



Even though a man can not get pregnant, he is also responsible [ree-spawn-sa-bull] if his wife or girl-friend gets pregnant. His partner may need his help.

You should never do any-thing sexual [sex-u-al] that you do not want to do.

▶ Most women who have sex can get pregnant

▶ Men are just as responsible for a pregnancy as women

Never do any-thing that makes you feel unsafe.

If a woman is pregnant because she was raped or because some-one hurt her, she does not have to ask the man what to do about the pregnancy. She should talk to some-body who can help her.

## ② Are You Pregnant?

### You

When we use “you” it can be:

- A woman who is pregnant
- A man whose wife or girl-friend is pregnant



### How Can a Woman Tell if She is Pregnant?

If a woman is pregnant, she may:

- Miss her period
- Get morning sickness

### Morning sickness

This is when a woman who is pregnant feels sick to her stomach [stum-ak]. Not every-body throws up, but some do.



- Have to pee a lot
- Feel really tired
- Have sore breasts
- Have a yellow sticky fluid come out of her nipples



## **What Should You Do if You Think You are Pregnant?**

If you think you are pregnant, the woman should take a home pregnancy [preg-nan-see] test. You can get one at the drug store. It is important that you take the pregnancy test as soon as possible.

A woman can take the test 3 to 5 days after she misses her period. The test should be taken the first time she pees in the morning.

You should go to the doctor if the test says:

- You are pregnant
- You are not pregnant

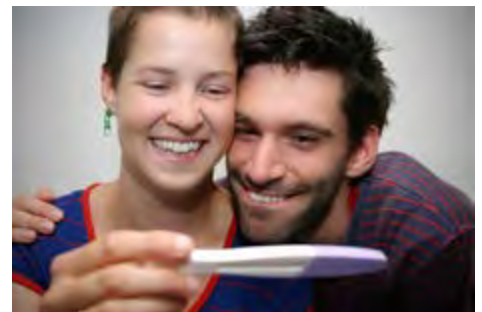
The doctor will do another test to check if you are pregnant.

## **How Will You Feel if You are Pregnant?**

If you made a plan to be pregnant, you may be happy to find out that you are going to have a baby.

Even if you made a plan to be pregnant, you may have a lot of feelings. It is ok to have a lot of feelings about being pregnant. You may feel:

- Nervous [nur-vus]
- Scared
- Sad
- Excited [ex-site-ed]
- Happy





If you did not plan to get pregnant, you may be scared and confused [con-fuse-d] about what to do.

To help make sure that you do not get pregnant if you do not want to, you should find a kind of birth [burr-th] control that works for you. Birth control will help stop you from getting pregnant.

For more info on birth control, read the brochure [bro-shur] "**Sexual Health.**" You can get the brochure on Vecova's website at: <http://vecova.ca/research/knowledge-centre/>



### Info

We will use info for information [in-for-may-shun]. Info is easier for some people to read.

## You Have Choices

The sooner you find out you are pregnant, the more choices you will have about what to do.

If you are pregnant you have 3 choices.

### 1. **You can stay pregnant and keep the baby**

This means you will be the baby's parent [pair-ent].



2. **You can stay pregnant and have the baby adopted [ah-dop-ted]**

This means some-one else will be the baby's parent.

3. **You can stop the pregnancy and have an abortion [a-bor-shun]**

This means that a doctor takes the embryo [em-bree-o] or fetus [fee-tus] out before it is fully-grown.

### **Embryo**

What the baby is called in the first 2 months of pregnancy.

### **Fetus**

What the baby is called after 2 months of pregnancy until it is born.

You can get more info from the brochure "**Pregnant? You Have Choices.**" You can get the brochure on Vecova's website at:

<http://vecova.ca/research/knowledge-centre/>

This brochure will give you info about the 3 choices you can make and some things to help you make the choice that is right for you.

You should also talk to your doctor or a counsellor.



**3 What is it Like to be Pregnant?**



**Health Care**

If you decide to stay pregnant, it is important for the woman to take care of her-self and the baby.

You and your partner need to make sure that you do not have any infections [in-feck-shuns] that could make the baby sick. Your doctor can tell you things that you should be tested for.

The woman should get pre-natal care before she gives birth.

<b>Pre-Natal [pree-nay-tull]</b>	Before birth.
--------------------------------------	---------------

- ▶ It is important for a woman to take care of her-self when she is pregnant
- ▶ A woman should get pre-natal care when she is pregnant

- It is very important to get pre-natal care.
- You need to pick who gives you health care. You can pick a doctor or a care-giver. But make sure that you like the person you pick.
- You need to go to the doctor for regular check-ups when you are pregnant. Make sure you ask as many questions as you need to.

You can pick the person who gives you pre-natal care. Women can get pre-natal care from 4 different kinds of people:

1. An obstetrician [ob-sta-trish-un]
2. A family doctor
3. A mid-wife
4. A doula [doo-la]

## 1. Obstetrician

An obstetrician is a doctor who has been trained to help women with pregnancy and birth. This kind of doctor can help women with all kinds of pregnancies.

- Some pregnancies do not have any problems. These are called regular pregnancies.
- Some pregnancies can have problems. These can be things like health issues you have. These are called hard pregnancies.

Some-times obstetricians work in groups. You might not see the same doctor all the time, or you might have a different doctor at the birth.

You will see an obstetrician for a check-up after the birth, but another doctor will take care of the baby.

If you have an obstetrician, you will give birth in a hospital.



## 2. Family Doctor

A family doctor can help you with your pregnancy. You can also see a family doctor after you have the baby.

Some family doctors can help you give birth to the baby. But some can not. They may not be able to help you if you have a hard pregnancy. If they can not help you, they will tell you about an obstetrician who can.

If you have a family doctor, you will give birth in a hospital.

## 3. Mid-wife

### Mid-wife

A mid-wife is a person who has been trained to help women with pregnancy and birth.

A mid-wife will give you care for 6 weeks after the birth.

Some-times, a mid-wife will have to send you to see an obstetrician. If this happens, the mid-wife will still give you some care.

If you have a mid-wife, you can give birth at home or in a hospital.



## 4. Doula

A doula [doo-la] is a person who can give you support when you are pregnant and when you give birth. A doula is like a coach. A doula can not give you medical care. Doulas can:

- Answer questions about pregnancy
- Give you advice about your care
- Help you with the birth
- Help you after the birth

In Alberta, if you have a doula it will not be paid for by provincial health care. You will have to pay the doula.

If you have a doula, you also need to have an obstetrician, a family doctor, or a mid-wife.



## **Make Healthy Choices**

The woman will need to make healthy choices when she is pregnant.

- Choose healthy foods
- Try to stay active and exercise [ex-er-size]
  - She should ask her doctor what kind of exercises she can do
- Get lots of sleep
- Drink lots of water

There are things a woman should not do when she is pregnant because it can hurt the baby.

- Drink any alcohol [al-ko-hall]
  - Alcohol can hurt the baby
- Take any drugs
  - Drugs can hurt the baby
  - A doctor can tell you if a drug you buy at the drug-store is safe or unsafe for the baby
  - You can also ask the pharmacist [farm-a-sist]





- The doctor will also tell you if any prescription [pre-scrip-shun] drugs can hurt the baby
- When you are pregnant, you may have to stop taking drugs that you usually take
- Smoke cigarettes
- Be around second-hand smoke

## Second-hand smoke

Smoke that you breathe in because some-one else is smoking.

- Have drinks with caffeine [caff-een] in them, like pop or coffee



## **How Will a Woman Feel when She is Pregnant?**

A woman's body changes when she is pregnant. Her body may feel un-comfortable [un-come-fort-a-bull].

She may have morning sickness and feel sick to her stomach [stum-ak] or throw up. This may only happen in the first part of the pregnancy, but it can last the whole pregnancy.

Women who are pregnant may get heart-burn.



### **Heart-burn**

A feeling you can get in your chest and throat when your stomach is upset.

She may have to pee a lot.

She may feel constipated [con-sti-pay-ted].

Women who are pregnant may feel very tired. The body is doing a lot of extra work, so it is normal to feel tired. She will need to rest more.



## **Can a Woman Have Sex When She is Pregnant?**

It is ok for a woman to have sex when pregnant, unless her doctor says she should not. Some women may have health problems that make it unsafe to have sex when they are pregnant.

If you do not know if it is ok to have sex, ask your doctor.

If you have sex when you are pregnant, the man should make sure that he does not have a sexually [sex-u-al-ee] transmitted [trans-mitt-ed] infection [in-feck-shun], or STI.

STIs can get passed to the baby and make the baby sick.

If the man has an STI, you should not have sex or you should practice “safer sex” and use a condom [con-dum] while pregnant.

Condoms do not protect you from all STIs. You should talk to your doctor before you have sex when you are pregnant.



## ④ What Happens When the Baby Comes?

▶ You may be happy or nervous after the baby is born

▶ A lot of new and exciting things will happen

▶ You are the most important person in your baby's world

### **Being a Parent**

You might feel scared or nervous about being a parent [pair-ent].

You should learn about what it is like to be a parent. This can help you feel more confident.

There are a lot of people you can talk to about being a parent. You can:

- Talk to your doctor
- Talk to your friends
- Talk to your parents
- Take classes
- Read books
- Talk to a counselor [cown-sell-or]

**Counselor**  
[cown-sell-or]

Some-one who is trained to listen and to help you work out your problems.

## **What Feelings Will You Have?**

After you have the baby,  
you may have a lot of feelings.

It is normal to have a lot of feelings after you  
have a baby.

As a parent you may feel happy or nervous.

Some women may feel sad. This is some-times  
called the "baby blues." A lot of women feel this  
way. It will go away in a few weeks.

She should tell her family and friends how she  
feels. They can listen to her and give her support.

Some women may feel sad all the time.  
This is called postpartum [post-par-tum]  
depression [dee-presh-un].

If the woman feels sad all the time and she can  
not stop feeling sad, she should tell her family and  
friends how she feels. They can listen to her and  
give her support.

She should talk to her doctor too.  
This can be normal for some women.





## Being a Parent

Your life will change a lot when you have a baby.

A lot of new and exciting [ex-site-ing] things will happen.

You will also be very busy.

You may feel like you do not have time to do any-thing that is not for the baby. Remember to take care of your-self.

Try to:

- Eat healthy food
- Get exercise [ex-er-size]
- Talk about your feelings
- Take time to relax and do a nice thing for your-self each day

It is ok to ask for help and support from friends and family members. Being a parent is a lot of work and most people need help.



## **Taking Care of Your Baby**

You are the most important person in your baby's world.

When your baby is first born, he or she will depend on you for every-thing.

Even though your baby will not be able to talk to you, your baby will tell you when he or she needs things. Your baby will cry and make noises.

When your baby makes happy noises, you can make noises too.

When your baby cries, you can take care of your baby's needs right away. This will tell your baby that you listen and that you love them.

You should talk to your baby each day. You can tell stories, sing songs, and talk about what you do as you do it. This is how babies learn about the world.

As your baby gets older, you can do a lot of fun things together. Your baby will be very curious [cure-ee-us] about the world. You can help your baby learn new things. You do not need a lot of money to do this.





You can:

- Go to the park or the play-ground
- Read stories
- Play games like Peek-a-Boo
- Go to story-time or play time at the library
- Draw pictures
- Take a baby swimclass

Your baby should feel safe and loved.

Show your baby that you like to spend time together.

Children learn when they watch you, listen to you, and do things with you. Doing things together is fun and will help your baby learn!





## Resources



### Alberta Health Services Programs

There are many places you can go for help. Here is a list of some of the places and what they can help you with.

#### **Alberta Health Services: Alberta Health Link**

- Phone in Calgary: 403-943-5465
- Toll free phone: 1-866-408-5465

You can call this number if you think your baby is sick or you have any health questions.

A nurse will give you advice and info.

**Alberta Health Services: Birth and Babies  
Childbirth and Parenting Education**

You can find them in Calgary at:

- Address: 400, 1509 Centre Street SW
- Phone: 403-781-1450
- Fax: 403-781- 2559
- Web-site: [www.birthandbabies.com](http://www.birthandbabies.com)



They have classes you can take that will help you get ready to be a parent. You can take these classes before and after your baby is born. Many of the classes are free.

They have classes like:

- Budgeting [buj-it-ing] for Baby
- Nutrition [new-trish-un] for Your Healthy Pregnancy
- Early Pregnancy

Their web-site can also show you info about:

- Finding a doctor
- Having a healthy pregnancy
- Taking a tour of the hospital before you have your baby

**Alberta Health Services: Early Start Phone Line**

You can find them in Calgary at:

- Phone: 403-244-8351

You can call this number if you have a baby who is under 2 months old. They will answer any questions that you have.

**Alberta Health Services: Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinics**

You can find them in Calgary at:

- Downtown Clinic (Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre)
  - Address: 5th Floor — 1213, 4th Street SW
  - Phone: 403-955-6500
- Sunridge Clinic (Sunridge Professional Building)
  - Address: 406 — 2675, 36th Street NE
  - Phone: 403-944-7666
- South Calgary Health Centre
  - Address: 31 Sunpark Plaza SE
  - Phone: 403-943-9510

These places can test you for STIs.



## Places You Can Go in Calgary

### **Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse**

- Address: 7th Floor, 320-5th Avenue SE, YWCA Mary Dover Building
- 24-hour support and information line in Calgary: 403-237-5888
- 24-hour toll-free support and information line: 1-877-237-5888

If you have been sexually abused or sexually assaulted, they can help you. You can get free counseling here if you are older than 11 and have been abused.

You can also get counseling if you are a support person for some-one who has been abused.

### **Calgary Food Bank Children's Milk Program**

- Address: 5000, 11 Street SE
- Phone: 403-253-2059

They can bring you milk if you:

- Have children under 18
- Have a limited amount of money
- Do not have enough food to feed your family

### **Calgary Sexual Health Centre**

- Address: 304, 301- 14th Street NW
- Phone: 403-283-5580
- Fax: 403-270-3209
- Email: [generalmail@calgarysexualhealth.ca](mailto:generalmail@calgarysexualhealth.ca)
- Web-site: [www.calgarysexualhealth.ca](http://www.calgarysexualhealth.ca)

They can:

- Give you support if you decide to be a parent
- Give you info about pregnancy
- Tell you who you should talk to.

Their web-site has info about

- Pregnancy
- Your choices if you are pregnant

### **Calgary Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic**

- Address: Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre, 5th Floor — 1213, 4th Street SW
- Phone: 403-955-6700
- Fax: 403-955-6721 OR 403-955-6722

This place will test you for STIs.

The clinic will keep your test private.

You do not need an Alberta Health Care number.



**Families Matter**

- Suite 325 — 2116 27th Avenue NE
- Phone: 403-205-5178
- Fax: 403-205-5191
- Web-site: [www.familiesmatter.ca](http://www.familiesmatter.ca)

This place can help you find support groups and classes for parents.

Their web-site shows you:

- Programs that parents and children can do together
- Programs for dads
- Post-partum support groups

**Families Matter for Post-partum Support**

- Phone: 403-205-5177

This is a group that can help women who have stress or depression after they have their babies.

They can help a woman talk to other women who have felt the same way.

They can help a man find support.

You can talk to them on the phone or in a group meeting.



## Web-sites You Can Go To

### **Alberta Health Services: Birth and Babies Online**

- Web-site: <http://online.birthandbabies.com>

This web-site has 12 free online pre-natal classes. You can take these classes before your baby is born.

You will learn about things like:

- Having a healthy pregnancy
- What it is like to have a baby
- How to take care of a baby

### **Canadian Federation [fed-er-a-shun] for Sexual Health**

- Web-site: [www.cfsh.ca](http://www.cfsh.ca)

This web-site will tell you about picking a doctor or a care-giver.

It will tell you about:

- What to expect when you are pregnant
- How to take care of your-self when you are pregnant



### **Caring for Kids (Canadian Pediatric Society)**

- Web-site: [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

This web-site has info about:

- Pregnancy and babies
- How to keep kids safe
- How kids grow and learn
- Behaviour and parenting
- When your child is sick

### **Calgary's Child**

- Website: [www.calgaryschild.com](http://www.calgaryschild.com)

This website shows you info about:

- Health and safety
- Education
- Travel
- Fun things to do as a family
- Classes you can take
- Places you can get support
- How kids grow and learn
- Childhood stages



## Parent Link Centre

- Web-site: [www.parentlinkalberta.ca](http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca)

This web-site shows you info about:

- Healthy pregnancy
- Parent support and education
- Child health and safety
- Childhood stages



**For every woman, having a baby is a challenging time, both physically and emotionally. It is natural for many new mothers to have mood swings after delivery, feeling joyful one minute and depressed the next.**

**- Canadian Mental Health Association**

Please think of the environment when printing this brochure.

Please print double sided.

Having a Baby is an information brochure developed for adults with low English literacy created by Vecova, located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

403.284.1121

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