



Prenatal Infection Prevention Month

February 2025

Prenatal Infection Prevention Month is a worldwide observance to promote awareness of infections transmitted from mother to baby. Prenatal infections are fungal, parasitic, bacterial or viral illnesses that can be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or during the delivery process.¹ In developed countries, infections are associated to approximately 10-20% of stillbirths, while the percentage is even higher in developing countries.^{2,3} Many more babies are born with disabilities, such as hearing loss or birth defects, because of these infections. The good news is that in many cases, prenatal infections can be prevented, and Prenatal Infection Prevention Month places a spotlight on this issue.⁴

Infection Diagnosed During Pregnancy, Kansas, 2021-2023

Infection	2021	2022	2023
Chlamydia/Gonorrhea*	432	484	539
Syphilis*	30	61	58
HIV*	<6	<6	<6
Hepatitis B**	55	54	44
Hepatitis C (Infants Born to HCV-Positive Women)**	39	56	46

* Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention. STI/HIV Surveillance Data Request [Unpublished data]. Kansas Department of Health and Environment; 2024.

** Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Response. Perinatal Hepatitis Surveillance Program, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2024.

What Can Providers Do?

Reducing preventable maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality requires a collaborative effort among healthcare providers at every level.



Emphasize

routine prenatal screening to evaluate maternal immunity and increase early diagnosis and treatment of prenatal infections.



Educate

and make a strong recommendation that women receive the appropriate adult immunizations before conception and the recommended vaccines during pregnancy. **Evidence shows that strong provider recommendations improve immunization acceptance.**



Utilize

immunization information systems to document vaccinations and use data to inform maternal and child health strategies and program planning.



Share

resources and educate women that prenatal infections can be prevented with healthy pregnancy habits such as practicing good hygiene, receiving prenatal care and immunizations, good nutrition, and taking environmental precautions to avoid dangerous infections.¹



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Prenatal Infection Patient Resources

Prevent Infections for Baby's Protection Infographic

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

Virus

- [Chickenpox](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\)](#)
- [Influenza \(Flu\)](#)
- [Measles/Rubella](#)
- [Mpox](#)
- [Pertussis](#)
- [Zika](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of infections:

- Get [vaccinated](#) against viruses that cause the flu, chickenpox, measles, rubella, pertussis and COVID-19. Talk to your provider about getting vaccinated.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Stay away from people who are sick (if possible), and wear a face mask if exposed to people with serious infections like COVID-19.⁵

STI

- [Preventing Infections in Pregnancy-ACOG](#)
- [About STIs and Pregnancy-CDC](#)
- [Infections and Reproductive Health-CDC](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of STIs:

- Get tested. Find out if you have an STI and get treated right away.
- The best way to protect yourself and your unborn baby from complications of an STI during pregnancy is to use protection at all times.
- [Attend all prenatal appointments.](#)⁵



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Prenatal Infection Resources

Provider Resources

- [STI Treatment Guidelines](#)
- [Screening and Testing for STIs in Pregnancy](#)
- [Prenatal Syphilis: A Guide for Women's Health Care Providers](#)

Other

- [Bacterial Vaginosis](#)
- [Food Poisoning \(listeria or listeriosis\)](#)
- [Toxoplasmosis](#)
- [Periodontal Disease \(infected gums\)](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of infections from food:

- Cook meat, poultry (chicken, turkey), fish, shellfish and eggs until they're done. Don't eat them if they're undercooked or raw. Heat deli meat and hot dogs before eating.
- Wash all your food before you cook or eat it. Wash all cooking utensils, dishes and your hands after touching raw meat, chicken or fish.⁵

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of other infections:

- Brush and floss your teeth every day. Get regular dental care during pregnancy. Make sure your dentist knows you're pregnant before getting an X-ray.
- Don't change a cat's litter box. Ask someone else to do it.
- Don't touch soil that may have cat poop in it. Wear gloves when you work in the garden.⁵

1. National Association of Country and City Health Officials, (2018, February 15). *International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month: The Importance of Maternal Immunization*. The Essential Elements of Local Public Health. naccho.org/blog/articles/international-prenatal-infection-prevention-month-the-importance-of-maternal-immunization
2. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2021). Management of Stillbirth. *Obstetric Care Consensus, 10*, e110-e132.
3. Causes of death among stillbirths. Stillbirth Collaborative Research Network Writing Group. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2011; 306: 2459- 68.
4. Sepsis Alliance. (2021, February 9). *It's International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month*. sepsis.org/news/its-international-prenatal-infection-prevention-month.
5. March of Dimes (2017, June) *Prenatal care checkups*. marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/planning-baby/prenatal-care-checkups.



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Social Media Messages

Click the images to download and use to spread awareness about Prenatal Infection Awareness Month on your social media. The images are high quality and are free to download for non-commercial use only.



Post 1

February is International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month. Prenatal Infections can be passed from mother to baby during pregnancy or birth. Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Learn more at: acog.org/womens-health/videos/preventing-infections-in-pregnancy

Febrero es el Mes Internacional de la Prevención de las Infecciones Perinatales. Las infecciones Perinatales pueden transmitirse de la madre al bebé durante el embarazo o el nacimiento. La mayoría de las infecciones perinatales se pueden prevenir. Aprenda más en: acog.org/womens-health/videos/preventing-infections-in-pregnancy

Post 2

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Receive early prenatal care and prenatal screening — including for sexually transmitted infections. Learn more at: cdc.gov/sti/about/about-stis-and-pregnancy.html#:~:text=If%20you%20are%20pregnant%2C%20you,you%20and%20the%20developing%20baby

La mayoría de las infecciones perinatales se pueden prevenir. Reciba atención prenatal temprana y exámenes prenatales, incluidos los de infecciones de transmisión sexual. Aprenda más en: cdc.gov/sti/es/about/acerca-de-las-infecciones-de-transmision-sexual-y-el-embarazo.html



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Social Media Messages

Post 3

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Receive immunizations against viruses that cause the flu, chickenpox, measles, rubella, pertussis and COVID-19. Talk to your provider about getting vaccinated. Learn more at: cdc.gov/vaccines-pregnancy/recommended-vaccines/index.html

La mayoría de las infecciones perinatales se pueden prevenir. Al vacunarse contra los virus que causan gripe, varicela, sarampión, rubéola, tos ferina y COVID-19. Consúlte con su proveedor médico para vacunarse. Aprenda más en: cdc.gov/vaccines-pregnancy/recommended-vaccines/index.html

Post 4

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Practice good hygiene — wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid individuals who are sick. Learn more at: cdc.gov/clean-hands/about/index.html

La mayoría de las infecciones perinatales se pueden prevenir. Las buenas prácticas de higiene: Como lavarse las manos a menudo con agua y jabón durante al menos 20 segundos. Manténgase alejado de las personas que están enfermas. Aprenda más en: cdc.gov/clean-hands/about/index.html

Post 5

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Practice good nutrition — wash all your food before you cook or eat it. Thoroughly cook all food. Do not consume raw or undercooked meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Learn more at: fda.gov/food/people-risk-foodborne-illness/food-safety-moms-be

La mayoría de las infecciones perinatales se pueden prevenir. Mantenga una buena alimentación: lave todos los alimentos antes de cocinarlos o comerlos. Cocine bien todos los alimentos. No consuma carne, aves, marisco o huevos crudos o que no se hayan cocinado por completo. Aprenda más en: fda.gov/food/people-risk-foodborne-illness/seguridad-alimentaria-para-futuras-mamas

