



2.7.3 PRECONCEPTION COUNSELING

POLICY:

As a core Title X service, Title X agencies must offer preconception health services in accordance with the CDC recommendations to improve pregnancy and birth outcomes. The goal of preconception health services is to decrease adverse pregnancy outcomes.

PROCEDURE:

Preconception is defined as a time when a reproductive-aged female is not pregnant but at risk for becoming pregnant or when a man is at risk for impregnating his female partner.

The goal of preconception health care for women is to recognize and modify risks that impact health and/or pregnancy outcomes. This includes biomedical, behavioral, and social risks.

For men, addressing their direct contributions to the infant's health and recognizing their impact on a woman's health is important.

Couples or individuals planning a pregnancy, seeking infertility services, or at high risk for an unplanned pregnancy should be offered preconception counseling.

Clients contemplating pregnancy within the next year should be given the opportunity for special counseling prior to discontinuing their method, with the objective of improving the outcome of a planned pregnancy:

- **Oral contraceptive/contraceptive patch/contraceptive vaginal ring**
 - There is no evidence to recommend that a period of time elapse between the cessation of hormonal contraceptive use and initiation of a planned pregnancy.
 - Client may be advised to return for evaluation if menstrual periods do not resume six to eight weeks after cessation of these hormonal contraceptives.
- **LARC/Injectable**
 - **IUD-** No special recommendations
 - **Depo-Provera-** Since ovulation may take as long as 9-12 months to return, it is advisable to have the client plan to stop the injections up to a year before they wish to become pregnant, and to use another method of birth control until conception is desired.
 - **Contraceptive implant-** No special recommendations



Clients seeking pregnancy should receive the following education:

- Early and continued prenatal care during the pregnancy
- Prenatal vitamin with 400-800 mcg of folic acid while trying to get pregnant
- Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and drug/medication use both while trying to achieve and during the pregnancy
- Avoid environmental chemicals that could harm a pregnancy
- Be up to date on immunizations prior to the pregnancy
- Discuss the importance of spacing pregnancies
- Explanations regarding referrals for care as indicated

RESOURCES:

NDFPP Protocol HM 4 Preconception Health

RHNTC Preconception Counseling Checklist

[Pre-conception Counseling Checklist 072319.indd \(rhntc.org\) \(4/2022\)](#)

ACOG Pregnancy Counseling

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