

Thinking about having children? Time for a reproductive life plan.

Whether you choose to have children now, in the future, or never, it helps to have a plan. Did you know that about half of all pregnancies are unplanned? And an increasing number of unplanned pregnancies lead to low birth weight babies, premature births, birth defects and infant deaths. Many of these problems are preventable with the right health care. Here are a few things to think about:

Do I want children?

If I want children some day, how many?

Do I think I am too young or too old to have a healthy baby?

If I have more than one child, how far apart in age do I want my children to be?

If I have children, will I still work? Will I work full-time, or part-time?

Will I stay home or will my partner stay home to care for the children?

Will I stay home until the children are in kindergarten? Or until they're in college?

Am I willing to hire a babysitter for my children?

Do I have a parent or friend who is willing to babysit?

Am I open to adoption as an alternative to a pregnancy?

Am I ready for a child?

Is my body prepared to have a baby? Am I healthy?

Do I need to stop smoking? Do I exercise routinely?

Am I overweight or underweight?

Do I have high blood pressure?

Am I free of sexually transmitted infections?

Do birth defects run in my family?

Can I financially support a baby?

Do I have a support system? (family, friends, neighbors)

Will I have access to health insurance?

What will I use for birth control now?

Do I want to go back to school?

Do I want to travel first?

Do I want to be married before I have a child?

What if I don't want children?

Will my partner or I use birth control?

If I have no children, am I comfortable with that?

How will I feel when other people talk about their kids or grandkids?

What will I fill my life with if I have no children? Do I want a career? My own business?