Planning for a Healthy Future

Algorithm for Providers Caring for Women of Childbearing Age

Questions to ask women of childbearing age (14-45 years) at each visit. Is she:

1. Taking a multivitamin with 400 mcg of folic acid every day?
NO → Counsel to begin taking multivitamin with 400 mcg of folic acid daily.

2. Active and at a healthy weight?
NO → Counsel on activity level and need to gain or lose weight.

3. Eating a variety of healthy foods and drinking plenty of water?
NO → Counsel on improving nutrition.

4. Smoking or exposed to second-hand smoke?
YES → Counsel on resources to stop smoking and tips to avoid second-hand smoke.

5. Using illicit drugs and/or alcohol?
YES → Refer to appropriate abuse treatment programs.

6. Have any health problems (acute or chronic)?
YES → Discuss need for treatment or effectiveness of current treatment/self-care.

7. Getting regular mental, dental, and health checkups?
NO → Identify barriers and possible solutions. Provide positive feedback for keeping this appointment.

8. Living or working in an unsafe environment?
YES → Discuss strategies to avoid unsafe environments, provide referrals to support programs as appropriate.

9. Socioeconomic issues present?
YES → Consider referral to appropriate programs and/or community services.

Jointly prioritize list of concerns/areas of improvement.

Choose one or two to initially focus on.

D

Refer to specialists for specific concerns as appropriate.

Set follow-up visit to monitor progress on health/behavior improvement.

10. Desiring pregnancy now?
YES → Jointly prioritize areas in need of improvement as identified by the questions 1-9 prior to pregnancy.

G

A B C D

NO / UNSURE → Discuss current birth control practices and options.

Discuss importance of planning for pregnancy and healthy child spacing. Encourage pre-pregnancy visit when pregnancy is desired and offer resources about planning for pregnancy.

Discuss at current visit or set up follow-up visit to discuss:

- Review medical history
- Review medications & determine if these are the best choices for pregnancy
- Review family history (genetic conditions)
- Offer screenings (Varicella, rubella, HIV, hemoglobinpathies)
- Review previous pregnancy outcomes
- Considerations for various disease states
- Discuss importance of healthy child spacing
- Discuss involvement of partner

E F J

Refer to specialists for any of these concerns as appropriate.

Set follow-up visit for screenings and to monitor progress on areas of concern.

Enter into prenatal care when pregnancy achieved.

H I

Postpartum care

WAPC Resources Key*

A. Folic Acid Position Statement

B. *Planning for Pregnancy: Women with Obesity.*

C. *Planning for pregnancy: Women with Epilepsy, Depression, Diabetes, Asthma*

D. *Prescription for a Healthy Future*

E. *Becoming a Parent™* Preconception Checklist

F. Provider Reference Guide to *Becoming a Parent ™* Checklist.

G. *Becoming a Parent™* booklet, pamphlet, video

H. *Early Pregnancy Information: Tips for a Healthy: Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy* leaflet

I. *Laboratory Testing During Pregnancy* Recommendations

J. *Planning for Pregnancy: Preconception Care for Men*

*The resources referred to as part of this algorithm are included as part of the WAPC *Healthy Birth Toolkit*.

Using the Algorithm

The purpose of this algorithm is to promote the health of all women in their childbearing years and the health of their potential children. Health care providers can use the algorithm to:

- **Put the life course approach to women's health into action**
- **Identify areas of risk of which a woman may not be aware**
- **Integrate preconception and interconception care seamlessly into well-woman care**
- **Identify chronic conditions and optimize therapies prior to pregnancy**
- **Suggest opportunities for behavior modification to optimize health status**
- **Re-orient one's self to key determinates (questions 1-9) related to maternal health and pregnancy outcomes (for providers who do not routinely care for women of childbearing age)**

WHO: Use the algorithm when providing care for all women of childbearing age presenting for care. Anyone who is rooming or examining the patient can ask the ten questions.

WHEN: The algorithm can be used at all visits with women of childbearing age—from annual physicals to visits for acute illnesses.

HOW: Begin by asking the ten questions included in the algorithm. The guidance provided in the algorithm can assist providers in making recommendations and/or developing specific care plans for patients. Instances where WAPC materials may be used to support care are indicated on the algorithm by orange boxes.

Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care

McConnell Hall
1010 Mound Street | Madison, WI 53715
Phone: 608-417-6060 | Fax: 608-417-6089
Web: www.perinatalweb.org

This algorithm was developed by a multidisciplinary work group of leaders in their respective disciplines (including nursing, public health, genetics, and pharmacy) practicing in Wisconsin representing the Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care. The algorithm was reviewed by external experts in the field representing family practice, obstetrics and gynecology, internal medicine, pediatrics, nurse midwifery, family planning, and public health.

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WAPC Resources

The Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care (WAPC) has developed many provider and patient oriented resources to promote optimal health during the childbearing years. Points where these resources can be used to support patient care are indicated on the algorithm. All of these materials are available through WAPC and most can be downloaded at the "Materials and Publications" section of the WAPC Web site, www.perinatalweb.org,. Spanish language versions of many of these resources are also available. A brief description of each of the resources is provided below.

A. Folic Acid Position Statement: This position statement presents current research and recommendations regarding folic acid intake before and during pregnancy.

B. *Planning for Pregnancy: Women with Obesity*: This patient information sheet is intended to help obese women prepare for a health pregnancy.

C. *Planning for Pregnancy: Women with Epilepsy, Depression, Diabetes, Asthma:* These patient information sheets are intended to help women with chronic conditions prepare for a healthy pregnancy.

D. *Prescription for a Healthy Future*: Available in a pad format for easy use by providers, the prescription integrates health messages important throughout a woman's life, including during the childbearing period. Each prescription contains a list of steps a woman can take to improve her overall health and her chances of having a healthy baby if she were to become pregnant. The back of each prescription includes online resources for women to learn more about each item included in the prescription.

E. *Becoming a Parent™* Preconception Checklist: The checklist is designed for women and men considering pregnancy to complete. The woman and her health care provider can review the checklist to identify any risk factors that may influence future pregnancy outcomes.

F. Provider Reference Guide to *Becoming a Parent ™* Checklist: This reference guide generally parallels the *Becoming a Parent™: Preconception Checklist*. It is intended to provide the health care provider with a brief explanation of the significance of the specific risk factors identified on the checklist.

G. *Becoming a Parent™* booklet, pamphlet, video: Items in this series provide individuals and couples with helpful and practical information to use when making the decision to have a child or additional children.

H. *Early Pregnancy Information: Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy* leaflet: This leaflet is tailored to the needs of pregnant women who have limited preconceptional or interconceptional care and/or who experience a delay in getting into prenatal care.

I. *Laboratory Testing During Pregnancy* Recommendations: This report offers recommendations on various laboratory tests that should be considered during the course of prenatal care.

J. *Planning for Pregnancy: Preconception Care for Men*: This patient information sheet is intended to help men improve their overall health and the health of their future children.