



*Plan your health. . . Live your life*

**A Guide To Making A Reproductive  
Life Plan That Is Right For YOU!!**

## What is a Reproductive Plan and Why is it important for me??

A Reproductive Life Plan( RLP) is a set of goals that you make about having or not having children. It includes how many children you want to have, and when you want to have them. It also helps you plan the spacing for your pregnancies, or prevent getting pregnant when you are not ready. Part of your Reproductive Life Plan includes goals to improve your personal health.

If you choose to have children you should discuss your RLP with your partner, and decide together how you both want to plan your family. Your Reproductive Life Plan is not set in stone and can change, but the important thing is to start thinking about it **NOW!**



### Let's Get Started!!

#### Read and Answer the Following Questions.....

Would you like to be a mother someday?  Yes  No  Unsure

If you answered YES:

How old would you like to be when you have your first or next baby? \_\_\_\_

How many kids would you like to have? \_\_\_\_

How far apart would you like them to be? \_\_\_\_

What is your plan to prevent pregnancies that you are not ready for?

What will you do if you experience an unplanned pregnancy?

If you answered NO or Unsure:

What is your plan to prevent a pregnancy?



## PERSONAL HABITS.....

Some behaviors can increase your health risks and affect the health of your future babies. That is why they should be avoided starting now. Check any of the following behaviors that apply to you.....



- Smoking
- Drinking or binge drinking( drinking 5 or more drinks with alcohol in one sitting)
- Using illegal drugs (marijuana, cocaine, meth, etc)
- Unhealthy eating or overeating

For more information or help with an addiction please visit [www.pathwaysmi.org](http://www.pathwaysmi.org)

Pathways of Western MI, Inc. 616.396.2301

**Here are some healthy habits to maintain no matter what your future plans are. Check any of the behaviors that apply to you and your partner....**

- Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains
- Exercising regularly
- Taking a multivitamin that contains 400mcg of folic acid
- Getting regular checkups with your doctor and dentist
- Getting enough sleep
- Using condoms to protect yourself from infection when you are sexually active
- Managing stress



For more info visit.....[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) and

[www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/folic-acid.cfm](http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/folic-acid.cfm)



## HEALTH PROBLEMS.....

Your health will affect the health of your future babies; make sure your health issues are under control before you EVER get pregnant. Check any that apply to you:

- Diabetes
- Problems with your Thyroid
- Asthma
- Blood clotting condition
- Seizures
- Mental Health concerns, including depression
- Any infections, Please list \_\_\_\_\_



\*\*\*Once you become sexually active you may want to be tested for Sexually Transmitted Infections. For more information visit [www.miottawa.org/health](http://www.miottawa.org/health) or 616.396.5266 to schedule an appointment.

## Vaccines/Immunizations

Vaccines help to protect you from certain disease and illnesses, like the ones listed below. When you are protected, your antibodies are passed on to your future babies, protecting them for the first few months of life. After that, a baby needs his/her own vaccines. The important thing is to make sure your vaccines are up to date BEFORE you get pregnant.

### ARE YOUR VACCINES UP TO DATE????



- Tetanus/Pertussis
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella
- Seasonal Flu
- HPV

\*\*Note..As an adult you should have received one dose of Tdap (combination of Tetanus and Pertussis) and then every 10 years a Tetanus booster.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/adult-schedule.htm>

## FAMILY HEALTH HISTORY.....

Health Problems can often run in families so it's important to know your family history for yourself and your children if and when you have them.



**HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- A baby born too early
- A baby who weighed less than 5.5lbs
- Preeclampsia/Eclampsia ( high blood pressure, seizures)
- Diabetes that started during a pregnancy
- Problems getting pregnant
- 2 or more miscarriages
- Stillborn baby (a baby born dead)
- A baby born with birth defects. If so, what kind of defects? \_\_\_\_\_
- Asthma
- Obesity
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Depression

**NOTE:** Make sure to talk to your doctor about any other health problems that you or your partner may have.

<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/fhh-web/home.action>

## MEDICATIONS.....

**Some medications are not safe to take during pregnancy. Make sure to tell your doctor not only what prescriptions you are taking, but also any over the counter medications.**



**List any prescriptions and/or over the counter drugs, including vitamins, supplements, or herbs.**

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## YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE.....

The healthiest pregnancy is a planned pregnancy. When you visit with your doctor, don't be afraid to ask questions about preparing for a healthy pregnancy. When you are ready to have a baby, see your doctor at least 3 months ahead of time to ensure that you are in good health. Among other things you will be asked about your menstrual cycle (your periods). Many women have irregular periods so tracking them on some sort of calendar is very important.



Do you track your periods?  YES  NO

How far apart are your periods? \_\_\_\_\_

How long do they last? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your flow heavy or light? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have painful periods( cramps, bloating, etc)?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have someone you can talk to about sexual health issues?  YES  NO

Are you planning to become pregnant soon?  YES  NO

If no, you may be interested in some type of birth control. For information on birth control and other sexual health issues please visit [www.bedsider.org](http://www.bedsider.org)

Do you know when in your menstrual cycle you are most likely to become pregnant???

Visit these sites for more information/apps on tracking your monthly period.



[www.imensies.com](http://www.imensies.com)

[www.ladytimer.com](http://www.ladytimer.com)

[www.mymonthlycycles.com](http://www.mymonthlycycles.com)

## PERSONAL SAFETY.....

Some women are abused by people who love them. Abuse is NEVER okay and it creates an unsafe place to live. Your safety is an important health factor. Are any of the things listed below happening to you???



   Is there anyone in your life who physically hurts you? Do they push, hit, slap, or kick you?

   Is there anyone in your life who says mean or hurtful things to you?

   Is there anyone in your life who forces you to take part in sexual activities( including touch) that makes you feel uncomfortable?

   Is there anyone in your life that tries to control the things that you do?

If you answered YES to any of these questions there is help available.

Please call 1.800.848.5991 or visit

[www.aplaceforwomen.org](http://www.aplaceforwomen.org)

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.....

Thinking about how a pregnancy and a family will affect your future is important.

Ask yourself these questions.....

Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? The next 10 years?

How much education would you like to complete?

Do you plan on having a career?

Would you like to be a stay at home mom?



<http://www.mindtools.com/>

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH.....



Your ability to handle difficult situations and stress plays a big part in your over all health. Answer the following questions about your emotional health.

When you feel sad do you usually bounce back quickly or do you stay sad for a long time?

Have you experienced post-partum depression with any previous pregnancy?

What sorts of things do you find yourself worrying about?

When you get angry, how do you calm yourself?

How do you generally treat people who are close to you?

What do you do if someone says or does something that you don't like?

**\*\*Note...** Emotions are complicated. If you find yourself needing someone to talk to, don't be embarrassed to contact a mental health provider in your area. Visit [www.miottawa.org](http://www.miottawa.org) for more information or call 616.392.1873

## FINANCES....

Life is expensive...having a family is also expensive. It is a good idea to make a financial plan for the future.

Do you have:

- a place to live
- money for groceries
- reliable transportation
- health, auto, dental, home, life insurance
- a savings for emergencies

