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

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 and

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 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 ___Asthma
___Preeclampsia/Eclampsia (high blood pressure, seizures) ___Obesity
___Diabetes that started during a pregnancy ___Heart Disease
___Problems getting pregnant ___Stroke
___ 2 or more miscarriages ___Depression
___Stillborn baby (a baby born dead)
___A baby born with birth defects. If so, what kind of defects?_________________

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.

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
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

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
www.ladytimer.com
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

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 overall 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 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

References: Utah Department of Health, Ottawa County Health Department, Pathways of Western MI, Community Mental Health of OC and OCHD