



Prenatal Infection Prevention Month

February 2024

Prenatal Infection Prevention Month is a worldwide observance to promote awareness of infections transmitted from mother to baby. Prenatal infections are fungal, parasitic, bacterial or viral illnesses that can be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or during the delivery process.¹ According to research, up to 24% of stillbirths in developed countries, like the U.S., result from infection.² Many more babies are born with disabilities, such as hearing loss or birth defects, because of these infections. The good news is that in many cases, prenatal infections can be prevented, and Prenatal Infection Prevention Month places a spotlight on this issue.³

Infection Diagnosed During Pregnancy, Kansas, 2018-2022

Infection	2020	2021	2022
Chlamydia/Gonorrhea ¹	648	433	486
Syphilis ¹	28	30	59
HIV ¹	1	1	1
Hepatitis B ³	48	55	54
Hepatitis C (Infants Born to HCV-Positive Women) ³	36	39	56

1. Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention. *STI/HIV Surveillance Data Request [Unpublished data]*. Kansas Department of Health and Environment; 2022.
2. COVID Pregnancy Surveillance Program, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2022.
3. Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Response. *Perinatal Hepatitis Surveillance Program*, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2022.

What Can Providers Do?

Reducing preventable maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality requires a collaborative effort among healthcare providers at every level.



Emphasize

routine prenatal screening to evaluate maternal immunity and increase early diagnosis and treatment of prenatal infections.



Educate

and make a strong recommendation that women receive the appropriate adult immunizations before conception and the recommended vaccines during pregnancy. **Evidence shows that strong provider recommendations improve immunization acceptance.**



Utilize

immunization information systems to document vaccinations and use data to inform maternal and child health strategies and program planning.



Share

resources and educate women that prenatal infections can be prevented with healthy pregnancy habits such as practicing good hygiene, receiving prenatal care and immunizations, good nutrition, and taking environmental precautions to avoid dangerous infections.¹



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Prenatal Infection Patient Resources

Prevent Infections for Baby's Protection Infographic English/Spanish

Virus

- [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [Zika](#)
- [Influenza \(Flu\)](#)
- [Chickenpox](#)
- [Measles/Rubella](#)
- [Cytomegalovirus \(CMV\)](#)
- [Pertussis](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of infections:

- Get [vaccinated](#) against viruses that cause the flu, chickenpox, measles, rubella, pertussis and COVID-19. Talk to your provider about getting vaccinated.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Stay away from people who are sick (if possible), and wear a face mask if exposed to people with serious infections like COVID-19.⁴

STI

- [Syphilis](#)
- [Group B Strep](#)
- [Chlamydia](#)
- [Gonorrhea](#)
- [Hepatitis B/Hepatitis C](#)
- [HIV](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of STIs:

- Get tested. Find out if you have an STI and get treated right away.
- Don't have sex. This is the best way to prevent getting an STI.
- If you have sex, have sex with only one person who doesn't have other sex partners. Use a condom if you're not sure if your partner has an STI. Ask your partner to get tested and treated for STIs.
- [Attend all prenatal appointments](#)⁴

Other

- [Bacterial Vaginosis](#)
- [Food Poisoning \(listeria or listeriosis\)](#)
- [Toxoplasmosis](#)
- [Periodontal Disease \(infected gums\)](#)

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of infections from food:

- Cook meat, poultry (chicken, turkey), fish, shellfish and eggs until they're done. Don't eat them if they're undercooked or raw. Heat deli meat and hot dogs before eating.
- Wash all your food before you cook or eat it. Wash all cooking utensils, dishes and your hands after touching raw meat, chicken or fish.⁴

Patient talking points to reduce the risk of other infections:

- Brush and floss your teeth every day. Get regular dental care during pregnancy. Make sure your dentist knows you're pregnant before getting an X-ray.
- Don't change a cat's litter box. Ask someone else to do it.
- Don't touch soil that may have cat poop in it. Wear gloves when you work in the garden.⁴

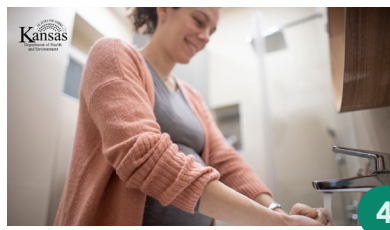
1. National Association of County and City Health Officials, retrieved from [International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month: The Importance of Maternal Immunization - NACCHO](#); 2018
2. Progeny Health, retrieved from [February is Prenatal Infection Prevention Month](#) (progenyhealth.com); 2021
3. Sepsis Alliance, retrieved from <https://www.sepsis.org/news/its-international-prenatal-infection-prevention-month/>, 2021
4. March of Dimes, "Infections"; Session 5: Handout 4, *Becoming a Mom® Prenatal Education Curriculum*; 2021



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Social Media Messages



Post 1

February is International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month. Prenatal Infections can be passed from mother to baby during pregnancy or birth from mother to baby during pregnancy or birth. Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Learn more at: cdc.gov/pregnancy/infections.html

Post 2

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Receive early prenatal care and prenatal screening— including for sexually transmitted infections. Learn more at: cdc.gov/pregnancy/infections.html

Post 3

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Receive immunizations against viruses that cause the flu, chickenpox, measles, rubella, pertussis and COVID-19. Talk to your provider about getting vaccinated. Learn more at: cdc.gov/pregnancy/infections.html

Post 4

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Practice good hygiene — wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid individuals who are sick. Learn more at: cdc.gov/pregnancy/infections.html

Post 5

Most Prenatal infections are preventable. Practice good nutrition — wash all your food before you cook or eat it. Thoroughly cook all food. Do not consume raw or undercooked meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Learn more at: cdc.gov/pregnancy/infections.html