

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 1, 2009

Contact: *Name here*  
*Phone here –or- Email here*

National Birth Defects Prevention Network spreads the message to “Get Fit for Pregnancy.”

*(Your City, Your State) – (Your organization)* is joining the National Birth Defects Prevention Network (Network) to share the message that a mother’s health, including her weight, before, during and after pregnancy is an important foundation to having a healthy baby who grows into a healthy child. “Getting Fit for Pregnancy” is the theme of National Birth Defects Prevention Month in January, 2009.

Good health habits for everyone include knowing your family history, keeping regular check-ups with a doctor and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Regular physical activity and a healthy diet are important components of a healthy lifestyle for everyone. For every woman, from puberty to menopause, these habits should also include taking a multivitamin with 400 mcg of folic acid daily, starting before she gets pregnant, to improve the likelihood of delivering a healthy baby.

“We are excited to be part of this national awareness campaign. Though many women may know that being overweight increases their chance for diabetes and other health conditions in themselves, they may not realize that being obese or even just overweight creates unnecessary risks to the baby’s health. Moms who are overweight or obese have higher risk pregnancies. They are more likely to experience hypertension, gestational diabetes and preeclampsia – conditions that add to the chance of having a premature baby. But that’s not all. Studies show that babies of obese mothers are more likely to be born with birth defects, like spina bifida. Improving mothers’ health, and ultimately their baby’s health, is why we’re working to reach women, their families and health care providers in our state with this important message,” said *(Your contact of your organization)*.

Women who are pregnant or planning to get pregnant can take control of their health to improve their chance of a healthy pregnancy,” said *(Your contact last name)*. “Good habits include regular physical activity, about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, or more. Healthy eating means having a balanced diet, low in fats, with at least 5 or more servings a day of fruits and vegetables. A woman should talk to her doctor or other healthcare provider about making healthy changes to get fit for pregnancy. Getting to a healthier weight helps an expectant mother feel great. And making better food choices for herself will prepare her to make healthier choices for her family. “The United States has more than 60 million women of childbearing age, and approximately one in five is obese. We need to work together to get this message out.”

The National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN), with over 250 members nationwide, collects and exchanges information about birth defects and their prevention, encourages research, and provides technical support to state and local birth defects

monitoring programs. To learn more about the Network and Birth Defects Prevention Month, please visit [www.nbdpn.org](http://www.nbdpn.org). (*Your organization*) is a member of the Network and works to (*mission statement here*).

(*Your organization*) is participating in National Birth Defects Prevention Month by (*add a couple details about your local activities, e.g. distributing information to women and their health care providers across the state, participating in health fairs, presentations at local schools, etc.*).

To learn more, please contact (*Your organization*) at (*Phone here*) or (*Email here*) or visit our web site (*Your organization's web site*).

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