



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Healthy Pregnancy, healthy child (PROTECTION)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer, rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion, rather than telling people what to do.
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.
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Topic

Healthy pregnancy, healthy child

Objectives

- To develop an understanding how a mother’s behaviour and health during pregnancy affects her baby’s development.
- Awareness of safe practices during pregnancy – avoiding alcohol, etc.
- Awareness of the importance of good nutrition during pregnancy, and the use of folic acid and other supplementation.

Introduction

Welcome to <Show name> brought to you by SABC and Ilifa Labantwana.

Did you know that, during pregnancy, a mother’s state of health has a huge impact on the development of her unborn child? If you’re pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant soon, it’s clearly very important that you focus on maintaining your own health, in order to have a positive impact on your baby. Today we’re going to discuss some of the most important things

you can do to ensure a healthy pregnancy and thus give your child the best chance to grow healthily and positively. And here in the studio to tell us in more detail all about this is <xxxxxxxxxxxx> from <xxxxxxxxxxxx>. Thanks so much for being here, <xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>...

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>So, let's get right into it: what is staying healthy during pregnancy all about?</i></p>	<p>Eating well during pregnancy, and the right food, is essential for your health and your child's long-term health and development. Certain substances are harmful to your child's development – avoid alcohol, drug use and smoking. It's also really important to do some gentle exercise, so you keep as fit as possible, and to try to keep stress levels to a minimum. It's critical that women understand that what you do and eat while you're pregnant affects your growing child in your womb – and the baby's continuing development once born.</p>
<p>2. <i>Where can pregnant women and their unborn babies get support for a healthy pregnancy?</i></p>	<p>Women have a right to free health care during pregnancy and child birth. Women should go to the clinic as soon as they know they are pregnant and at least four times during pregnancy. This is so that health workers can support the pregnant mother by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking on both her health and that of her unborn child • Advising on where to go for safe delivery and how to take care of herself and the newborn child • Giving certain supplements and medicines to prevent Malaria and Tetanus • Referring her to counselling if she is depressed or having family problems, or unable to control drinking or drug use
<p>3. <i>So what is happening to the baby during pregnancy and how does the pregnant mother's health affect this?</i></p>	<p>During pregnancy the baby is growing rapidly in the mother's womb. Not only are the various parts of his body developing, but also</p>

<p>4. <i>You said earlier that eating healthily is important – why is this and what should you be eating during this time?</i></p> <p>5. <i>Why are vitamins and minerals really important for women when they are pregnant? Where can you get them?</i></p>	<p>the brain. The foetus’s development is deeply related to the mother – and therefore ensuring a healthy baby requires the mother to focus on what she does. During this time the baby is both very sensitive to both what the mother eats and drinks but also the mother’s emotions. Whatever stress the mother faces can impact on the baby’s health.</p> <p>What you eat, drink or take during pregnancy goes straight to your baby through your blood. Therefore you need to be so careful about what you eat. Make sure you eat lots of healthy food, energy-rich food and especially fruit and vegetables. Drink lots of water. Avoid salt and too much sugar. Ensure that your food is free from germs and prepared in a clean environment. This will all impact on your baby’s healthy development.</p> <p>Having the right minerals and vitamins when you are pregnant helps your baby grow well, and can prevent certain birth defects (problems with the baby). The daily requirements for a number of key micronutrients increase before and during pregnancy. During the first two months of pregnancy the baby and placenta develop quickly and are sensitive to both too much and not enough micronutrients.</p> <p>Healthy foods, such as fresh fruit and vegetables, contain a lot of vitamins and minerals, so that’s another reason to try and have a very healthy diet during pregnancy. But it’s also really important to take some essential supplements. For pregnant mothers, these are Folic Acid, Vitamin A and Iron. These should be available from your clinic, so be sure to ask.</p>
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<p>6. <i>You mentioned Folic Acid - what exactly is that and why is it so important for pregnant women?</i></p>	<p>Folic Acid is a B vitamin. It helps the body make healthy new cells, so for women who are or may get pregnant, it's really important and particularly important to ensure you have enough from early in your pregnancy, if not before. Getting enough Folic Acid before and during pregnancy can prevent major birth defects of the baby's brain or spine.</p> <p>There are a variety of foods with folic acid in them. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leafy green vegetables • Fruits • Dried beans, peas, and nuts • Enriched breads, cereals and other grain products <p>But, as many women in South Africa may not get enough folic acid from the foods they eat, you can also take it as a dietary supplement. Again, make sure you ask about it at the clinic.</p>
<p>7. <i>And why should you also be taking an Iron supplement?</i></p>	<p>Iron and Folic Acid work together to help prevent anaemia during pregnancy. Maternal anaemia is linked to an increased risk of adverse outcomes during pregnancy, such as low birth weight and premature deliveries. It's more difficult to prevent anaemia developing during pregnancy if women are anaemic before falling pregnant. So, making sure you try to have a healthy, balanced diet before even conceiving is ideal. Iron-rich foods (such as meat) are expensive, however, so taking a supplement is extra-important.</p>
<p>8. <i>OK, so we've talked about the things you should make sure you have plenty of during pregnancy – but what are the things you should definitely avoid?</i></p>	<p>There are some things that can hurt and damage your growing baby, so you have to be really careful to avoid them. They can even sometimes result in birth defects or</p>

<p><i>11. We know that South Africa has a very high level of HIV infection, as well, so is it important for pregnant women always to be tested for HIV?</i></p>	<p>Absolutely. It means having a simple blood test at the clinic. If a mother is HIV-positive, she and her baby will be given medicines (called antiretrovirals) to lower the chance of passing HIV to the baby. She will be invited to join the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV programme – known as PMTCT. She will be given antiretrovirals to take during and after pregnancy, as well as for her child. If a pregnant woman has HIV and is not aware of her status or does not receive proper preventive treatment, she can pass it on to her baby. You can find more information at your nearest clinic offering health care to pregnant women.</p>
<p><i>12. Clearly, a pregnant woman needs as much support as possible. Apart from the clinic, what other forms of support does she need?</i></p>	<p>First and foremost, is the support of her family and friends and, if she’s working, her employer. In order to ensure the best possible birth outcome for her baby, she needs to be able to take care of herself, and feel safe and supported. Becoming a mother can feel very daunting, knowing that you are responsible for the care and development of a vulnerable new being, so it’s important that people close to the pregnant women take time to help and advise her.</p>
<p><i>13. A big issue for many women during pregnancy or after the birth of their child, however, is depression. Why is this a problem and what can be done about it?</i></p>	<p>In pregnancy, depression has been shown to effect the growth of the child (low-birth weight). This depression can be so serious that the mother feels unable to care for her child or may even hurt the child. Any woman experiencing depression for more than a few days after birth should get help so it doesn’t continue to affect her, her child and the rest of her family.</p>

<p>14. <i>No matter how well you look after yourself during pregnancy, I guess problems can still occur. What are some of the danger signs to look out for in pregnancy?</i></p>	<p>It's vital that any pregnant women with following signs gets immediate help to go to the clinic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If she is very tired, pale and anaemic or out of breath • If she has unusual swelling of her legs, arms or face • If it appears that her unborn baby moves very little or not at all • If she has spotting or bleeding from the vagina during pregnancy or heavy or ongoing bleeding after delivery • If she has severe headaches, stomach aches or vomiting • If her waters break before the baby is due for delivery • Of if she has a high fever, fits or convulsions
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Conclusion

Being as healthy as possible in pregnancy is really important for the health and development of your child. This is true not just for a child's development in the womb, but for her long-term health and potential. What mothers do during pregnancy will help their children to achieve better things in the future. By looking after herself, a mother is looking after her child.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Understand that the health of the mother while pregnant affects the health and development of her unborn child for the long term
- Know about healthy behaviours during pregnancy
- Understand the importance of not drinking, smoking or taking drugs while pregnant
- Be aware of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and how to prevent it