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Preconception Health and Health Care Update

Greetings

This is a monthly communication for individuals interested in improving the health of women and infants through preconception health and health care. We welcome your readership and contributions.

It's National Women's Health Week: Time to Focus on Preconception Health



This week - May 10 - May 16 - is the 10th annual [National Women's Health Week](#). Coordinated by the Office on Women's Health, US Department of Health and Human Services events across the country are intended to empower women to make their health a top priority.

Through this year's theme, "It's Your Time," this initiative encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life.

Promoting women's health is at the heart of all preconception health activities – encouraging women to engage in healthy behaviors, to have a reproductive life plan, to get comprehensive well-woman check-ups, and/or to seek health care to manage chronic disease. See side bar on Take the Pledge.

During National Women's Health Week, communities, businesses, government agencies, health organizations, women's advocates, and other groups work together to educate women ways to improve their health.

To learn more, visit the National Women's Health Week website at: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw/>

The Power of Prevention for Women, Children, and Families



The Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) released a new report on May 8 entitled [The Power of Prevention for Mothers and Children](#). The report summarizes the cost effectiveness of several public health interventions supported by state Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programs. The report also

highlights many interventions that policymakers should make available to all women and children in health reform legislation. AMCHP principles focus on:

- Quality affordable health insurance coverage for all Americans.
- A comprehensive insurance benefits package should include evidence-based services required for all women of reproductive age, children, adolescents, children with special health care needs, and their families.
- Because health insurance coverage alone is essential but not sufficient to improve the overall health of populations, adequate federal support for state and community-wide public health systems and preventive services must be included in any health reform package.

"As we celebrate this Mother's Day it is sobering to note that the United States currently ranks 29th in infant mortality rates among industrialized nations. Reductions in maternal and infant mortality have stalled in recent years and rates of preterm and low birth weight births have increased over the last decade. Alarming, there are places in this country where the African American infant mortality rate is double, and in some places even triple, the rate for whites." The Power of Prevention. AMCHP

In This Issue

Featured Article

National Women's Health Week.

Take the Pledge!

The 7th annual National Women's Checkup Day, Monday, May 11, 2009, is dedicated to encouraging women to visit health care professionals to receive or schedule a checkup and promoting regular checkups.

Help women gain access to services vital to the early detection and treatment of diabetes, depression, sexually transmitted infections, hypertension, HIV/AIDS, and other conditions.

Help providers offer women reproductive health and preconception care screening.

Click here to learn more about **National Women's Checkup Day.**

Thinking about health reform?

Visit these web sites:

[White House healthreform.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov/healthreform.gov)

[Jacobs Institute of Women's Health](http://www.jacobsinstitute.org/womenshealth)

[Womenstake: Women in Health Reform](http://www.womenstake.org/women-in-health-reform)

[Women's Policy, Inc.](http://www.womenpolicy.com)

Links to Ideas and Action that Promote Preconception Health and Health Care

About.com [Robin's Pregnancy Birth Blog on preconception care](#)
US News and World Report Blog on Women: [Recession's Impact on Women's Health](#)

Journal Articles

[B12 Deficit May Boost Risk of Birth Defects](#)
[Impoverished Women With Children and No Welfare Benefits](#)
[Trends in Perinatal and Infant Health Disparities Between Rural American Indians and Alaska Natives and Rural Whites](#)
[Preservation of Fertility in Women with Cancer](#)

Policy

[White House Council on Women and Girls](#)

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/09/03/11/Opportunities-their-mothers-and-grandmothers-and-great-grandmothers-never-dreamed-of/>

Resources for Consumers

[Preconception Visit Print-and-Go Guide](#)
[Preconception Health Quiz](#)