WHAT IS PRENATAL HEALTH?

PRENATAL HEALTH IS...

- the care one receives when they are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- care for the mother and child so they remain happy and healthy during the pregnancy.
- It is okay to call your doctor and schedule a visit even if you are not yet pregnant. Better safe than sorry!

For more information - please see the Vermilion County Health Department website: http://vchd.org/
**WHY DO I NEED PREGNATAL CARE?**

- if not given prenatal care, babies are 3x more likely to have a low birth weight and 5x more likely to die
- It's easier for doctors to address health concerns when women are coming regularly
- Early treatment can prevent and cure problems that could harm the babies.
- It gives mothers a better understanding of what labor and delivery will be like.

**Do’s and Don’ts**

**Do’s**

- Take a multivitamin or prenatal vitamin with folic acid every day. Folic acid is most important in the early stages of pregnancy.
- Get the flu shot. The flu kills many people every year.
- Eat as much healthy food as you can!
- Eat lots of foods containing iron. This includes red meat, chicken, fish, beans, peas, and spinach.

**Don’ts**

- Don’t smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs. These can cause long-term harm or death to your baby. Ask your doctor for help quitting
- Avoid a sedentary lifestyle. Get up and be active! We need to lower Blood pressure to reduce risks for preeclampsia.
- Avoid honey and changing cat litter boxes.
- Do not take hot baths or use saunas

**WHAT TO EXPECT AT A PREGNATAL VISIT**

- Ask about your health history including diseases, operations, or prior pregnancies
- Ask about your family’s health history
- Do a complete physical exam, including a pelvic exam
- Check your blood pressure, height, and weight
- Calculate your due date
- Answer your questions - DON’T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS! They are encouraged!