






Objectives

- By the end of the activity, participants will be able to discuss realistic ways to incorporate preconception health into their daily practice
 - Brief Review of Preconception/Interconception health
 - Importance and barriers to incorporating preconception health into practice
 - What is new in the arena of preconception health



Preconception / Interconception Health



Preconception Care

“Preconception care is a set of interventions that aim to identify and modify biomedical behaviors and social risks to a woman’s health or pregnancy outcome through prevention and management.... Preconceptional care is more than a single visit to a healthcare provider and less than all well-woman care.”



Moos, M.K. From Concept to Practice: Reflections on the Preconception Health Agenda. Journal of Women's Health (2010) 19;3:561-567



Goal of Preconception Health

“Provide women, and if they desire, their partners, with information to make timely, informed decisions about their reproductive futures.”



March of Dimes Nursing Module, "Preconception Health Promotion: A Focus for Women's Wellness".



Where did the concept come from?

Recommendations to Improve Preconception Health

1. Improve the knowledge and attitudes and behaviors of men and women related to preconception health.
2. Assure that all women of childbearing age in the U.S. receive preconception care services that will enable them to enter pregnancy in optimal health.
3. Reduce risks indicated by a previous adverse pregnancy outcome through interventions during the interconception period, which can prevent or minimize health problems for a mother and her future children.
4. Reduce disparities in adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Recommendations to Improve Preconception Health & Health Care

1. Individual Responsibility across the Lifespan
2. Consumer awareness
3. Preventative Visits
4. Interventions for Identified Risks
5. Interconception Care
6. Pre-pregnancy checkup
7. Health Insurance Coverage for Women with Low Incomes
8. Public health programs and strategies
9. Research
10. Monitoring Improvements



Why isn't Prenatal Care Enough?

- History of Prenatal Care
- Has it changed over the last 150+ years
- Change to Life Course Perspective





Why is Preconception Health Important?

- Maternal Morbidity & Mortality
- Infant Morbidity & Mortality
- Preterm Birth Rates
- Low-Birth Weights
- Associated Illnesses





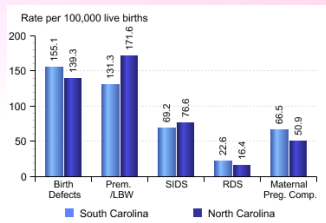
Maternal Mortality Rate



- Primary measure of whether women can expect to survive complications that arise in pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum period
- Leading causes of maternal mortality
- How can we improve our rate?



Infant Mortality Rate



Infant deaths by cause of death: South Carolina and North Carolina, 2006
National Center for Health Statistics, period linked birth/infant death data. • Retrieved August 9, 2011, from www.marchofdimes.com/peristats.

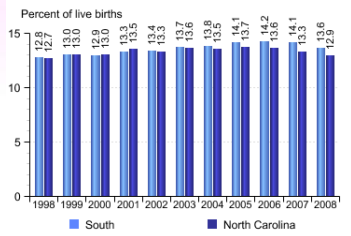
What is the Connection Between Interconception Health & Prematurity?



- We know that women who have had poor birth outcomes have an increased risk for recurrence.
- “By the time prenatal care is initiated, it may be too little too late to significantly alter the course or outcome of the pregnancy”

Maternal Child health Journal (2006). S107-122

Preterm Birth Rates

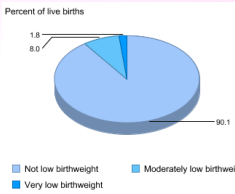


Preterm: South and North Carolina, 1998-2008
National Center for Health Statistics, final natality data. Retrieved August 9, 2011, from www.marchofdimes.com/peristats.

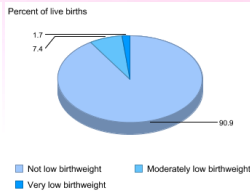
Distribution of Birthweights



South Carolina



North Carolina



www.marchofdimes.com/peristats. Retrieved August 9, 2011.



Barriers to Preconception Health in Practice



1st Barrier:

Who is Responsible for Providing & Promoting Preconception Health?



- Everyone is!
- Every woman, Every time





Recognized Barriers

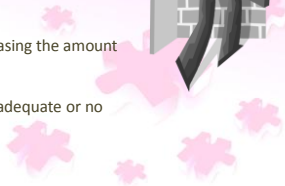
- Lack of provider knowledge
- Lack of patient knowledge or demand for services
- Lack of Provider time
- Lack of insurance coverage





Addressing Barriers

- Lack of provider knowledge
 - Get the information out there, share your knowledge about preconception / interconception health
- Lack of patient knowledge or demand for services:
 - How to increase this?
- Lack of Provider time
 - Can't do much about increasing the amount of time with the patient
- Lack of insurance coverage
 - How to access care with inadequate or no healthcare insurance?





Importance of Incorporating Preconception Health Into Practice

By providing preconception education and support we can:

EMPOWER women with knowledge, resources and a support system so they can:

1. Make informed decisions about their healthcare
2. Be an advocate for themselves in future pregnancies





How to Approach Preconception Health?

- Who gets the message?
- What is the message?
- How are we successful?





Who gets the message?





PRECONCEPTION CARE – What is the message?

IS NOT:

- Something new that is being added to the busy healthcare provider
- Smoking cessation services
- Choosing a medication for a patient with a chronic disease

IS:

- Giving protection
- Managing conditions
- Avoiding exposures known to be teratogenic





Basic Principles of Preconception Health:



- Prenatal care starts too late to prevent many of these poor pregnancy outcomes
- Women who have higher levels of health before pregnancy have healthier reproductive outcomes
- Preconception may be the way to improve poor pregnancy outcomes where traditional prenatal care hasn't been able to address issues





What if woman has high risk conditions?

- Consider every visit as an opportunity to address preconception needs to:
 - Prevent unwanted/unintended pregnancies
 - Provide preconception counseling, if pregnancy is desired
 - Encourage women/couples to actively choose when and when not to become pregnant
 - Provide general health promotion and disease prevention guidance





Who should be asking the questions?

- All providers should be asking about a patients reproductive life plan..
 - Getting healthier in the childbearing years
 - Getting on “safe” non-teratogenic medications before conception





How are We Successful?

When Preconception / Interconception Health is addressed on a routine basis, we increase the potential for:

- Identification of modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors for poor health and poor pregnancy outcomes before conception
- Developing strategies to reduce the potential impact of the risks





How to incorporate preconception health into daily practice



Preconception in Your Daily Practice

- What are you already doing?
- Recognition of what is part of preconception health
 - Realizing that you may already be doing it!
 - Let's change the way we think about preconception health
 - It's not something else added to your already busy schedule, rather, it is a piece of the care that you already provide, we are just renaming it.



Key Components of Preconception Health

According to Michael Lu, MD

1. Reproductive life plan
2. Past Reproductive history
3. Medical assessment
4. Medication use
5. Infection & immunizations
6. Genetic risks
7. Healthy weight & nutrition
8. Psychological & behavioral risks
9. Healthy environment
10. Physical assessment



Walker Karraa Interview series: Preconception Care, Preconception Care, Research, Uncategorized Dr. Michael Lu, preconception care, prenatal care, Walker Karraa, women's healthcare
<http://www.scienceandsensibility.org/?cat=948>



When is a good time to talk to women about Preconception / Interconception / Reproductive Life Plans?

Points of Opportunity

- Every contact with every woman
 - Every provider!
- The postpartum time period is a good opportunity for you to begin making healthy lifestyle choices. (especially after delivery of a premature infant)
- After a pregnancy loss (viable or non-viable)
- Annual GYN exam
- Antepartum patient





We Want to Encourage All Women to Focus on Being Healthy

- Manage chronic health conditions
- See you healthcare provider regularly
- Get regular dental care
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Start exercise program
- Eat a healthy diet

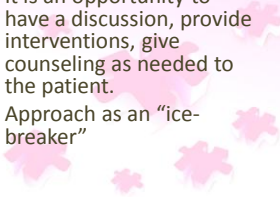




How do you approach it?



- Reproductive Life Plans can change
- Approach as a plan that is not set in stone.
- It is an opportunity to have a discussion, provide interventions, give counseling as needed to the patient.
- Approach as an “ice-breaker”





How do you incorporate this discussion into your scheduled appointment?

- Start with the questions of the Reproductive Life Plan & include, "How can I help you reach these goals"





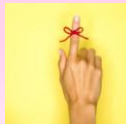
ACOG Recommendation:

- Clinicians should encourage women to formulate a Reproductive Life Plan and should discuss it in a non-directional method at every visit.





Things to remember...



- Start with open mind
- Encourage the patient to find her own voice
- Empower her to move from taking the "chance" in pregnancy to the "choice" of pregnancy.
- Once the patient makes her decisions, work to provide interventions that are tailored to that individual



“How do I encourage healthy behaviors?”

- Be a role model!
- Provide information & education to women and families about health
- Encourage women to be advocates for themselves in regard to their health
- Talk about healthy lifestyle choices in every encounter with women





One Model of a Reproductive Life Plan

- Do you hope to have any (more) children?
- How many children do you hope to have?
- How long do you plan to wait until you (next) become pregnant?
- How much space do you plan to have between your pregnancies?
- What do you plan to do until you are ready to become pregnant?
- What can I do today to help you achieve your plan?



What is new in the arena of preconception health



What's the Current State of Preconception Health?



- CDC
- ACOG
- March of Dimes
- State / Regional Level
- Other programs



South Carolina

- www.CarolinaTeenHealth.org





North Carolina

<http://www.beforeandbeyond.org/>





Helpful Websites:

- <http://www.everywomanflorida.org/>
- <http://everywomancalifornia.org>
- <http://www.poweryourlife.org>
- <http://www.everywomansoutheast.org>





Tune My Life

<http://www.tunemylife.org/>



<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/tune/Classro>



The Life Course Game:
A Simulation Experience



<http://www.citymatch.org/lifecoursetoolbox/index.php>



More Preconception Health in Action

http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/ha/reports/habriefs/2007/Preconception_Final_sec.pdf





Conclusions - Questions?



Thank you!

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