

# The History of Preconception Health in the United States



Health before pregnancy plays a critical role in maternal and infant outcomes. Conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and environmental exposures can affect pregnancy before prenatal care begins. Preconception health has evolved over decades through research, policy and public health programs. The timeline below highlights **key milestones in the evolution of preconception health.**

## Timeline of Preconception Health

**1979**

Preconception Health is mentioned in a federal position paper. This paper includes the concept of pre-pregnancy care and interconceptional care.

**1983**

The first *Guidelines for Perinatal Care* is published by the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, American College of OBGYNs, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

**1985**

ACOG provides a grant that is used to develop the Preconception Health Appraisal; *Preventing Low Birth Weight* is published by the Institute of Medicine with recommendations on how to reduce pre-pregnancy risks.

**1993**

Preconception care is expanded to reach men through the publication of *Toward Improving the Outcome of Pregnancy: The 90s and Beyond* by the March of Dimes.

This introduced the concept as “reproductive awareness” as gender non-specific.

**1990**

Preconception Care is defined as an objective in the newly published *Healthy People 2000*.

**1989**

Preconception health is suggested to be considered “Opportunistic Care” by The Expert Panel on the Content of Prenatal Care.

**1995**

The first technical bulletin on preconception care is published by ACOG in May. Preconception care during routine visits is recommended for all women capable of pregnancy.

**2006**

CDC publishes *Recommendations to Improve Preconception Health and Health Care - United States*. This report outlines 10 main recommendations aimed at achieving preconception health goals.

**2022**

Preconception health goals are included in the North Carolina Perinatal Health Strategic Plan for 2022-2026.

**Today**, preconception health includes recommendations related to primary care utilization, environmental considerations, nutrition, folic acid education, and more. Preconception health is not gender specific and promotes overall wellness prior to pregnancy. To learn more about our community education program focused on preconception health, visit our website!