



PEI Tip Sheet

PHYSICAL PREPARATION FOR PREGNANCY AND DELIVERY

What You Need to Know

BLACK WOMEN, BIRTHING PEOPLE AND THEIR BABIES EXPERIENCE DISPROPORTIONATELY MORE ADVERSE BIRTH OUTCOMES THAN ANY OTHER RACIAL GROUP--INCLUDING INCREASED RATE OF C-SECTIONS, LOW BIRTH WEIGHT, AND PRE-TERM BIRTH.

For more information, access the Maternal Health Data Snapshot [here](#).



Prenatal exercise, healthy eating and other physical preparation **may lessen these outcomes disparities**

See articles below for more information.

While the causes of these disparities are complex and due in large part to systemic racism, providers can encourage individuals to physically prepare for birth, which may help mitigate these risks. Physical preparation includes a variety of interventions, including specific exercises for pregnant people (e.g., pelvic floor work), moderate to vigorous physical activity, and nutrition, as well as mindfulness, breathing exercises, and practice of comfort positions to alleviate pain during childbirth. Providers can share culturally affirming information regarding the benefits of such preparatory activities and connect individuals to local, affordable, and culturally appropriate resources to support these activities.

Additional Resources on the Topic

For more information on this topic, please follow these resource links:

[African American Women's Preparation for Childbirth from the Perspective of African American Health-Care Providers](#): This study provides a synthesis of the perceptions of 12 African American maternal health care providers about the ways in which African American women prepare for childbirth.

[The Influence of Exercise During Pregnancy of Racial/Ethnic Health Disparities and Outcomes](#): This study evaluates the influence of prenatal exercise on racial/ethnic disparities in gestational age, low birthweight, and risks of preterm birth, cesarean section, and low-birthweight neonates.

[Nutrition of Black Women During Pregnancy](#): This study examines consistency and adequacy of nutritional intake in a population of Black women in the second and third trimesters of pregnancy.

Referring to Programs

Click onto the following links to refer families to these programs

Black Infant Health

Group-based services where Black/African American women can connect, learn and prepare for the birth of their child.

Fatherhood Partnership

The 24/7 Dad program offers Black/African American fathers the opportunity to learn and grow together.

Doula Supports

Doulas are available to Black/African American families in their birthing experience.

Sharing Our Message

Download and customize the following messages from our website:
www.maternalhealthnetworksb.com/physical-prep-for-pregnancy

