Maternal & Child Health Program

September is National Infant Mortality Awareness Month

The Montgomery County Office of Public Health (OPH) recognizes September as *National Infant Mortality Awareness Month*. Together with other county agencies, organizations, and community members, the Office of Public Health would like to shine a light on ways to increase and promote maternal and child health.

Facts about Infant Mortality

⇒ Although the United States is considered to be one of the wealthiest countries, it is ranked 29th in the world in infant mortality.

⇒ Infant mortality refers to the number of deaths per 1,000 live births during the first year of life.

⇒ The infant mortality rate is considered the barometer by which the health of its entire population is gauged.

-The National Healthy Start Association

Tips for Maternal & Child Health

Preconception Health

- Focus on your health before becoming pregnant.
- Take steps to quit smoking, stop drinking, adjust any medications with the help of a doctor, and try to maintain a healthy weight.
- Talk to your doctor about current medical conditions and pregnancy planning.

Prenatal Care

- If you miss a period and you're sexually active, take a pregnancy test. The sooner you find out you're pregnant and schedule a prenatal appointment, the better it is for both you and your baby.
- Your medical provider can make sure you're healthy all throughout your pregnancy with regularly scheduled visits.

Pre-term Labor

- Pre-term labor is early labor that occurs before 37 weeks of pregnancy.
- Symptoms include: pressure on your lower belly, lower back aches and your water breaking.
- If you think you are experiencing even one symptom, call your provider immediately.

Benefits of Breastfeeding

- Plan ahead by discussing your breastfeeding plans with your provider.
- For further support, prior or during breastfeeding, contact a trained professional such as a Certified Lactation Consultant.
- You can also find support at your local hospital, a birthing center or OPH.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

- Place your baby on his or her back in a crib or bassinette alone, do not bed-share.

- Make sure your baby is sleeping on a firm surface without any padding, bumpers, cushions, pillows or soft bedding.

- Do not expose your infant to any smoke, including 3rd-hand smoke, which is found on clothing after a cigarette.

- Keep your infant in a cool room, around 72 degrees, to ensure he or she is not at risk for over-heating. Use a sleep sack instead of a blanket.

Infant Safety

- Follow guidelines for car seat, high chair, stroller, household, and sleep safety among others.

- Check with your health care provider for tips on infant safety and ways to baby-proof your home.

- Be sure to register all products you purchase for your baby so you can be notified in the event of manufacturer recalls and safety issues.

To schedule a car seat check, please call (610) 278-5119

Home Visiting Services

***Connect with a FREE Montgomery County
Family Support Program by calling:
1-888-404-0620***

Pregnant women and families with children under age six can benefit from evidence-based family support programs shown to improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect and improve family literacy and economic security. They include Early Head Start, Healthy Families America, Nurse-Family Partnership, Partners for a Healthy Baby and Parents as Teachers.

Montgomery County's Maternal and Child Health Program has a new centralized Intake and Referral line staffed by Felicia Roche, MCH Community Development Coordinator. Referrals can be made by calling the above number or faxing 610-278-5167 or through email at: MontcoHomeVisiting@montcopa.org.

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