

How long should you wait before getting pregnant again?

For most women, it's best to wait at least 18 months between giving birth and getting pregnant again. This means your baby will be at least 1½ years old before you get pregnant.

Too little time between pregnancies increases your risk of premature birth. Premature birth is when your baby is born too soon. Premature babies are more likely to have health problems than babies born on time. The shorter the time between pregnancies, the higher your risk for premature birth.

Your body needs time to fully recover from your last pregnancy before it's ready for your next pregnancy. Having at least 18 months between pregnancies may help reduce your risk for premature birth in your next pregnancy. Use this time to talk to your health care provider about things you can do to help reduce your risk. To learn more, go to marchofdimes.org/prematurebirth.

What you can do:

- Wait 18 months or more after having a baby before getting pregnant again.
- If you're older than 35 or had a miscarriage or stillbirth, talk to your provider about how long to wait.
- Use effective birth control until you're ready to get pregnant.
- Talk to your health care provider about birth control options.

Waiting at least 18 months doesn't mean for sure that your next baby will be born on time. But it can help.



TAKE ACTION

Get your 18 months.

Fill this out with your provider so you know when you can start trying to get pregnant again:

Example:

Date your baby was born May 16, 2017

Add 1 year and 6 months Nov. 16, 2018

Now you try:

Date your baby was born _____

Add 1 year and 6 months _____

WATCH A VIDEO

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