

Pregnancy Test Options Counseling in Family PACT

A Self Study Module for Pregnancy Test Options Counselors

**Presented by
Office of Family Planning
California Department of Public Health**



Navigation Tips

- Close all other Internet windows and applications before starting the module.
- Use arrow keys on keyboard to manually advance or reverse slides.



Objectives

1. Describe the role of a pregnancy test options counselor.
2. Describe key elements of pregnancy tests, prenatal care, adoption and abortion.
3. Describe the counseling issues around family planning services, preconception care, and infertility services as appropriate.
4. Identify Family PACT guidelines for conducting a pregnancy test options counseling session.



Intended Audience

- Any clinic staff person involved with counseling clients about the results of their pregnancy tests, including:
 - Physicians and clinicians
 - Nurses
 - Health educators and counselors
 - Medical assistants
- Trained and supervised non-clinician counselors can provide reimbursable education and counseling in the Family PACT program.



Three Module Sections

- Section 1 – Family PACT Standards for conducting pregnancy tests and the role of the pregnancy test options counselor
- Section 2 – Key elements of pregnancy tests, prenatal care, adoption, abortion, family planning services, preconception care, and infertility services
- Section 3 – Steps for conducting a pregnancy test options counseling session



SECTION 1:

Family PACT Standards & Role of the Pregnancy Test Counselor



Family PACT Standards

Availability of Covered Services

Standard E, #4

- Education and counseling about all options and referral resources, whether a pregnancy test is positive or negative, shall be provided in **an unbiased manner** that allows the client **full freedom of choice**.

- *Policies, Procedures and Billing Instructions* manual (PPBI), Standard E4



Family PACT Standards

Education and Counseling Standard G, #3

- Each client receiving a pregnancy test shall be provided with information about all options and education and counseling appropriate to the test results in order to make an informed choice
 - *Policies, Procedures and Billing Instructions* manual (PPBI), Standard G3



Family PACT Standards

Information to Give to Clients Appropriate to their Test Result

- Clients with **positive** pregnancy test:
 - Prenatal care
 - Adoption
 - Pregnancy termination
- Clients with **negative** pregnancy test:
 - Family planning services
 - Preconception care
 - Infertility services as appropriate



The Counselor's Role

- To assist a woman in clarifying and achieving her immediate reproductive goals
 - Understand your own values and beliefs
 - Provide unbiased and accurate information on all options



Understanding Clients

- Question 1 – Why would a woman who doesn't want to be pregnant NOT use birth control?
- Question 2 – Why would a man who doesn't want to be a father NOT use birth control?
- Question 3 – Why would a woman who doesn't want to have a child WANT to be pregnant?
- Question 4 – Why do people want to have sex?



Understanding Clients

- How will understanding these things about clients help you in a pregnancy counseling session?



Understanding Clients

- When are women most vulnerable to an unplanned pregnancy?
 - Immediately prior to menarche: ovulation occurs approximately 2 weeks before period
 - First few times having sex: usually no contraceptive preparation (esp. with youth)
 - Having sex with a new partner: with different sexual and contraceptive habits
 - After a move: moving away from home or to a new socio-cultural area



Understanding Clients

- When are women most vulnerable to an unplanned pregnancy?
 - Within a stable relationship:
 - Relationship is in its early stages: before a regular sexual/contraceptive pattern has been established
 - During conflicts and/or separations: contraceptive use may discontinue, then partners make up before re-establishing contraception
 - Right before or after marriage: when contraceptive vigilance may be relaxed



Understanding Clients

- When are women most vulnerable to an unplanned pregnancy?
 - Other times
 - After delivery: when fertility may be low and there is altered sexual activity, use of interim contraceptive methods, and new demands brought on by a new baby
 - End of childbearing: when there may be ambivalence about having more children
 - Before menopause: when fertility is decreasing and thus contraceptive vigilance may be relaxed



SECTION 2:

Key Elements of Pregnancy Tests, Prenatal Care, Adoption, Abortion, Family Planning Services, Preconception Care, and Infertility Services



Symptoms of Pregnancy

- Late period
- Breast tenderness
- Fatigue
- Nausea/vomiting
- Weight gain
- Frequent urination
- Slightly elevated temperature
- Protruding lower abdomen (after ~ 12 weeks)
- Increased vaginal discharge
- Fetal movement (after ~ 18 weeks)





How Pregnancy Tests Determine Pregnancy

- Pregnancy test – laboratory test that measures the human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) in blood and urine.
- Outer layer of the fertilized egg produces the hormone hCG.
- The egg produces increasing amounts of hCG until 60-70 days after fertilization.
- Test is accurate within 7-10 days after conception.



About Pregnancy Tests

- Two types of tests:
 - Blood
 - Urine
- Each measures the levels of hCG in a woman's body
- Family PACT only reimburses for urine tests



Understanding Test Results

- What does a positive or negative pregnancy test mean?
 - Positive – the test has picked up a significant amount of hCG and the client is likely pregnant.
 - False Positives – the test reads that the client is pregnant but in fact she is not.
 - Negative – the test has not picked up a significant amount of hCG, and the patient is likely *not* pregnant.
 - False Negatives – the test reads that the client is not pregnant but in fact she is.



Understanding Test Results

- Understanding test results
 - Any test can be wrong
 - Tests can be performed incorrectly
 - Specimens can get mixed up
 - Tests can expire
 - Any test can be less accurate than the company promises



Necessary Background Information

- Counselors should be prepared to discuss:
 - Prenatal Care
 - Adoption
 - Abortion
 - Family Planning Services/Contraceptive Methods
 - Preconception Care
 - Infertility Services





Three Considerations for a Positive Pregnancy Test

- Prenatal Care
- Adoption
- Abortion



About Prenatal Care

- Women attend regularly scheduled appointments with their health care provider to ensure the health of the mother and baby.
 - Nutritional, medical, psychosocial and educational care of mother and baby
- When to get prenatal care?
 - As soon as she knows or suspects she is pregnant



About Prenatal Care

- What basic information will she need?
 - More calories are needed to support the mother and fetus and ensure adequate fetal development.
 - Avoid empty calories and eat a well-balanced diet.
 - There is an increased need for protein, B-6, B-12, folic acid, calcium, iron, zinc and fluoride.
 - Total weight gain should be between 25 – 35 lbs.
 - Avoid cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs.
- Her doctor will determine additional medical, psychosocial and other needed care as appropriate.



About Adoption

- There are 2 types of adoption:
 - open
 - closed
- Birth parents should work with an adoption agency to be sure that their rights are protected.
- The cost of an adoption for the birth mother is minimal.



About Adoption

- All clients with a positive test must be given a referral to a local adoption agency/resource.
- Obtain listing of California adoption agencies from:
 - California Department of Social Services
Child and Youth Permanency Branch
Permanency Policy Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 8-13-66
Sacramento, CA 95814
 - Phone: (800) KIDS-4-US
 - www.childsworld.ca.gov



About Abortion

- 2 types of abortions available in the U.S.
 - Surgical – legally available in the U.S. since 1973
 - Medical – approved by the FDA in 2000
- Most abortions are done in the first trimester of pregnancy (first 12 weeks)
 - Safest time for the client to have an abortion



Surgical Abortion

- Surgical abortion
 - Usually requires 3 appointments
 - 1st appointment – client receives physical exam and information about the procedure
 - 2nd appointment – procedure performed
 - 3rd appointment – follow-up; clinician checks that there are no problems or infections



Surgical Abortion

- Surgical abortion
 - Local anesthetic applied to cervical opening; client may be sedated or put under general anesthesia.
 - Cervical opening is slightly widened by dilators.
 - A straw-like tube (cannula) is inserted into the cervical opening and into the uterus.
 - The tube is connected to a suction machine which applies gentle pressure to remove the pregnancy.
 - A small, spoon-shaped instrument (curette) may be used to make sure abortion is complete.



Medical Abortion

- Medical Abortion
 - Mifepristone/RU 486 + Misoprostol
 - Used for pregnancies equal or less than 63 days gestation
 - Mifepristone – is taken orally
 - 1 to 3 days later Misoprostol is taken orally or vaginally
 - Abortion occurs within 4 to 24 hours after using Misoprostol



About Abortion

- All clients with a positive test must be given a referral to a local site that offers abortions.
- To identify a provider:
 - Look in the phone book under “Abortion Services”; or
 - Go to the National Abortion Federation’s website at www.prochoice.org.



Considerations for a Positive Pregnancy Test: Key Elements

Tips for discussing each alternative:

- Each alternative must be presented to clients in an **unbiased** manner.
- Clients should be given written referral information for all three alternatives.
- Women have the legal right to exercise their choice and **counselors should not influence** women in any direction.
- For some counselors, abortion and/or adoption can be difficult options to discuss.
- Both adoption and abortion can be very controversial issues about which many people have strong feelings. **Pregnancy counselors must keep their personal beliefs out of their counseling sessions.**





Three Considerations for a Negative Pregnancy Test

- Family planning services
- Preconception care
- Infertility services



About Family Planning Services

- Clients who have a negative pregnancy test and do not want children right now are excellent candidates for contraceptive education and counseling, including emergency contraception.
- Counselors should be able to explain all of the available contraceptive methods so that clients can make an informed choice about what would be right for them.



About Family Planning Services

- Contraceptive Method discussion should include:
 - mechanisms of action,
 - effectiveness,
 - how to use the method,
 - possible side effects, and
 - warning signs for complications.



About Preconception Care

- Preconception care is health care that women receive prior to becoming pregnant
- Reasons to consider preconception care
 - Many women have health problems during pregnancy that may negatively affect the development of a healthy pregnancy, as well as put the mother at risk.
 - There are babies born with developmental and/or physical disabilities because of the poor health of the mother.



About Preconception Care

- Preconception care recommendations:
 - Get screened for STIs
 - Be of a healthy weight
 - Make sure any health problems are under control
 - Take a vitamin with 400 mcg of folic acid
 - Stop smoking, drinking and taking recreational drugs
 - Talk with health care provider about the desire to become pregnant



About Infertility Services

- Infertility is diagnosed if a couple has no conception despite having unprotected vaginal intercourse for 12 months.
- As a counselor, ask how long she has been trying to become pregnant.
- Review the menstrual cycle.
- Review preconception care information.
- Refer her to the clinician for further evaluation.



SECTION 3:

Steps for Conducting a Pregnancy Test Options Counseling Session





4 Stages of a Client Education Session

1. Preparing to meet your client
2. Helping your client feel comfortable
(Setting the Stage)
3. Sharing information and exploring feelings
4. Wrapping up the session



Stage One

- Preparing to meet your client
 - Prepare the room you will be using
 - Room with a door
 - Remove barriers between you and client
 - Keep room neat
 - Keep health education materials in the room
 - Find out what you can about your client
 - Name
 - The stated reason for the visit
 - Special language needs of the client
 - Find out what materials you'll need in the room

Stage Two

- Helping your client feel comfortable
 - Greet your client
 - Discuss confidentiality and mandatory reporting
 - Find out what she wants to know
 - Find out what she already knows (head and heart)
 - Set limits for the session
 - Encourage questions



Stage Three

- Giving information
 - Be sure your client has basic, medically accurate, factual information about every option, as appropriate.
 - Explore feelings and options.
 - Providing questionnaires
 - Asking questions (open-ended and closed-ended)
 - Observing nonverbal behavior
 - Listening actively
 - Establishing trust and rapport



Stage Four

- Wrapping up your session
 - Evaluate your client on the key points
 - Summarize the session
 - Make sure your client has written information to take home
 - Give your client contact information
 - Referrals, referrals, referrals...





Putting the Guidelines into Practice





Pregnancy Test Options Counseling Guidelines

- Prior to performing test (or giving results) determine what the client hopes the results will be.
- Give client adequate time to respond to results of pregnancy test and express feelings.





Pregnancy Test Options Counseling Guidelines

- Assess client's support system and encourage them to talk with a supportive person
 - Family member, partner, friend, spiritual leader





Pregnancy Test Options Counseling Guidelines

- What to do for a:
 - Positive test result
 - Negative test result





Positive Test Result General Steps

- Tell her she has a positive test result.
- Explain what that means, including what a false positive is.
- Ask her how she feels
- Determine length of the pregnancy.



Positive Test Result General Steps

- Discuss and provide written resources on prenatal care, adoption and abortion.
 - Provide in client's language, if possible
 - None are covered Family PACT benefits
- Emphasize that a decision does not need to be made on that day and that decisions can be changed.





Positive Test Result

And she wants to continue with her pregnancy

- Provide information on how to access prenatal care through Medi-Cal
- Deactivate client's HAP card on the next business day



Positive Test Result

And she does not want to continue with her pregnancy

- Review her medical history and rule out ectopic pregnancy.
- Discuss other important reproductive health topics:
 - Emergency Contraception
 - Contraceptive Methods
 - Sexually Transmitted Infection Risk Reduction
- Deactivate client's HAP card on the next business day.



Negative Test Results

General Steps

- Tell her that the test result is negative.
- Explain what that means.
- Ask her how she feels.
- Assess the time frame for accuracy of the test and the need for a re-test.
 - Refer to a clinician if she has pregnancy symptoms



Negative Test Results

General Steps

- Discuss and provide written resources on family planning services, preconception care, and infertility services.
 - Provide in client's language, if possible
 - Preconception care and infertility services are not covered Family PACT benefits





Negative Test Results

Yet she wanted to be pregnant

- Discuss and provide written information on preconception care and fertility awareness.



Negative Test Results

And she does not want to be pregnant or is not planning a pregnancy in near future

- Review her medical and contraceptive history.
- Provide information about emergency contraception.
- Provide family planning counseling.
- Explore issues related to having unprotected sex, including STIs.



Conclusion

- One of the most common reasons new clients come in to a clinic is to get a pregnancy test.
- Pregnancy test options counseling provides the foundation for many clients' entry into reproductive health care.
- Pregnancy test options counselors are vital in assisting clients to meet their family planning goals.





Provider Support Services

- Family PACT Website:
www.familypact.org
 - Client Education Materials
 - Cultural Competency Toolkit
 - Training Calendar of Events
 - Newsletters
 - Family PACT Webcasts and Online Modules
- Toll-free Provider Resource Line
1-877-FAM-PACT (1-877-326-7228)
- Email: familypact@cfhc.org



Upon exiting this module, if you have not already done so, please download the Evaluation Form by clicking the link on the Family PACT website and email the completed form to:

familypact@cfhc.org

**Or fax the completed form to:
(213) 368-4428**

Thank You!

