

Asking Clients about their Reproductive Life Goals

Reproductive life planning includes discussing your life goals as they relate to childbearing. It helps both women and men think about if and when they would like to have children. It can also increase awareness of how a person's behaviors now, can affect their health, future fertility and birth outcomes.

Begin the conversation

Let the client know you are going to ask some personal questions and tell why. For example:

"I'd like to ask you a few questions that may not seem related to the reason for your visit. We ask these questions of everyone, to help us provide quality health care."



Ask questions

There is not a specific set of questions you have to ask. Here are some examples¹:

- *What are your thoughts about getting pregnant or having a child?*
- *Do you plan to have any (more) children at any time in your future?*
- *How many children would you like to have?*
- *How long would you like to wait until you or your partner becomes pregnant?*
- *What can I do today to help you achieve your plan?*

If pregnancy is not desired at this time (or ever) continue with questions like:

- *Is there a family planning method you (or your partner) plan to use until you are ready for a child?*
- *How sure are you that you will be able to use this method without any problems?*

It is important to ask both women and men questions like these. Listen to the client's answers to know which question to ask next, and tailor your conversation to the client's specific needs. By asking questions about their reproductive life plan, you help guide the care that is provided.

Offer services

For example:

- If a client does not want pregnancy now, offer birth control methods that match their preferences and condoms for STD protection
- If a client is trying to achieve pregnancy, ask questions to help determine if counseling about maximizing fertility and/or basic infertility services are needed
- If a client wants to get pregnant, or chooses a less effective method, offer preconception counseling and STD services, as needed
- If a client is unsure, ask more questions to better meet the person's needs



Asking about reproductive life planning can help clients follow healthy behaviors and can support healthy birth outcomes.