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Get tested

THERE are all sorts of tests that a woman should go for before and during pregnancy. Before getting pregnant, you should check for diabetes, thyroid problems and infections which you may not have had proper immunisation for, such as hepatitis, rubella and HIV. For hepatitis and rubella, it's best to vaccinate before you get pregnant if you've not had your shots.

Obstetrician and gynaecologist Dr Gunasegaran PT Rajan say: "In the Malaysian context, before couples get pregnant, they should test for thalassaemia because it is more common here. The woman should go for the test to find out if she is a carrier. If her results are negative, then it doesn't matter if her husband is a carrier or not. If she is positive, then the husband would also need to test if he is a carrier."

Dr Guna says you don't actually need to wait till you want to have children to test for thalassaemia. It is a test you can do at any age to find out if you are a carrier.

"If the husband and wife are carriers, then they need to be counselled of the risk that their baby will have thalassaemia. When they are both carriers, there is a 25% chance that the child will have thalassaemia major and a 75% chance that the child will be a carrier."

During the pregnancy, a woman might have to undergo other diagnostic tests if the doctor thinks there are risks to her baby's health.

For more on such tests, go to ParenThots.

Focus on the Family

DR James Dobson says children would rather pick a fight with Dad and Mum in a public place, such as the supermarket or in the restaurant. They are smart enough to know that they are "safer" in front of other people. They will grab candy or speak in disrespectful ways that would never be attempted at home.

For Dr Dobson's advice on handling children who are bratty in public, go to ParenThots.

Parents' stories

THIS week, parents share their stories on being told their child could have a hole in her heart as well as learning safety from a child.

If you have a story to share – anything related to your parenting experience – write in to parenthots@thestar.com.my.



For peace of mind: Besides ultrasound scans, pregnant women should also undergo diagnostic tests if there are risks to her baby's health.

The best e-mail every two weeks wins a RM50 discount voucher from Kidz Spot in Tropicana City Mall, Petaling Jaya.

Win exclusive Playhouse Disney goodies

IF your child is a fan of Playhouse Disney's shows, you'll want to take part in ParenThots' latest contest.

All you have to do is go to the Playhouse Disney Celebration Centre microsite (<http://bit.ly/39RAC>), print out some party decorations, take photos of your party (with the décor) and submit them. Easy as that!

You will be able to see all the entries in the gallery at parenthots.com/contests/disney/. If you're not sure what sort of photo to take, just follow the examples there.

The first 30 entries will win a Playhouse Disney hamper worth RM120. You have till Oct 6.

From Oct 14-31, you will be able to vote on your favourite photo from the shortlisted 10 entries. The top three entries that get the most votes will win the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Talking Playset worth RM200.

Forum

IF you want to share advice, or trade parenting tips, or even ask questions, go to the ParenThots Forum. It's the latest meeting place for parents.

All are welcome to share anything related to parenting and being a parent and raising a family.