

MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH

World Health Day, celebrated on 7 April 2025, kicks off a year-long campaign on maternal and newborn health. The campaign, titled Healthy beginnings, hopeful futures, will urge governments and the health community to ramp up efforts to end preventable maternal and newborn deaths, and to prioritize women’s longer term health and well-being.


Maternal and newborn health is a critical aspect of public health in the Philippines. By working together, we can reduce maternal and newborn deaths and ensure every woman has the chance to thrive.

The following are preventable health issues:

Maternal Health	Cause	Symptoms
Severe Bleeding (Hemorrhage)	Failure of uterus to contract, retained placental tissue, or lacerations	Excessive bleeding after delivery, pale skin, weakness, dizziness
Preeclampsia or eclampsia	High blood pressure during pregnancy	High blood pressure, proteinuria, headaches, vision changes
Pregnancy-related Infections	Bacteria, viruses, or fungi	Fever, chills, abdominal pain, vaginal discharge
Complications from Unsafe Abortion	Lack of proper medical care, unsterile equipment, and untrained providers	Severe bleeding, infection, damage to reproductive organs, perforation of the uterus or intestines

Newborn Health	Cause	Symptoms
Premature Birth	Infections, chronic medical conditions, or lifestyle factors	Preterm labor, low birth weight, respiratory distress
Birth Complication (Birth Asphyxia)	Can be caused by, multiple factors, including umbilical cord prolapse or placental abruption.	Respiratory distress, low apgar scores, increased risk of complications
Neonatal Infections	Bacteria, viruses, or fungi	Fever, lethargy, poor feeding, respiratory distress, skin lesions or rashes
Congenital Anomalies	Genetic factors environmental factors, or infections during pregnancy	Visible birth defects (e.g., cleft lip or palate), internal organ defects (e.g., heart defects), developmental delays or disabilities


The following are ways to support women and newborn health



Antenatal Care:
Having regular check-ups during pregnancy can identify and manage complications early.



Skilled Birth Attendants:
Trained healthcare providers significantly reduce the risk of maternal and newborn deaths.



Postnatal Care:
Follow-up care for both mother and baby is crucial in the first weeks after birth.

Prioritize health, empower women, and build a brighter future for all.
Remember the 3S:

STAY INFORMED

Learn about maternal and newborn health from your healthcare provider and reliable sources like WHO and DOH Philippines.

SEEK CARE EARLY

Don’t delay seeking medical care during pregnancy or after childbirth.

SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

Advocate for better healthcare services and resources in your area.

References:
www.who.int • www.unicef.org • www.cdc.gov • www.nichd.nih.gov