A good start to life is influenced by the mother’s health and wellbeing even before conception.

Healthy weight at conception, early and regular antenatal care during pregnancy, and avoiding alcohol and other drugs are important during pregnancy. The father’s health and wellbeing also contributes to the health of the developing baby and infant.

Safe delivery at full term, breastfeeding to 12 months or longer, a nutritious diet during the early years and a nurturing, secure environment will give all Queensland children a great start.

A baby’s birthweight is a key indicator of infant health and a determinant of a baby’s chances of survival and health later in life.

Data in this factsheet refers to 2016 unless otherwise noted.
The health of Queenslanders 2018
Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland
Perinatal indicators in Queensland

Data were modelled from the Queensland Perinatal Data Collection 2012–2016. The logistic regression model was adjusted for baby's gestational age, mother's age, selected medical conditions and pregnancy complications, socioeconomic status, Indigenous status and plurality.

Factors contributing to birthweight

Low birthweight baby <2500g

- At least twice as likely for mothers who smoked during pregnancy
- 73% more likely for mothers who were overweight at conception
- 45% more likely for mothers who had less than 8 antenatal visits
- 25% more likely for Indigenous Queenslander mothers
- 12% more likely for mothers living in low socioeconomic areas

High birthweight baby 4000+g

- At least twice as likely for women who were obese at conception
- 50% more likely for women who were overweight at conception
- 9% more likely for mothers who did not have an antenatal visit in the first trimester

More information on perinatal indicators and the impact on health including access to interactive data visualisations and detail on definitions and methods is available from the main report and the website:
For further information: Population_Epidemiology@health.qld.gov.au