

Uh-Oh!

*Didn't plan on having a baby right now?
You're definitely not alone.*

BY KRISTEN DEDEYN KIRK

Nate Stockard from Katy, Texas thought he and his wife would have children when he turned 28.

Instead, his daughter was born when he was just 25.

"We were in the middle of some of the biggest changes in our lives," says Nate, "and were not ready for a child."

The couple had married in November 2006 and on their honeymoon decided to move to Houston, Texas, even though they had purchased a house in Tennessee two short months earlier.

They sold their house, leased an apartment in January 2007 and quickly fell in love with the Houston city life – until three months later when they realized that the two Stockards would soon be three.

"We were scared and nervous," Nate remembers. "I think the idea of being responsible for someone made us a wreck."

Nate and his wife are not alone: Studies estimate that 50 percent of pregnancies in America are unplanned. About 80 percent of the surprised women decide to continue with their pregnancies, and many turn their initial yikes! into yahoo! as they grow in both width and wisdom over the next nine months by taking three steps:

Step One: Talk the baby talk – quietly

It was a Saturday morning when Lisa Spellman, an Omaha, Nebraska mom of two at the time, suspected she was pregnant. She



headed to her doctor's office, took a test that came back positive and then cried hysterically.

"To make matters worse, the big chicken (her husband) was supposed to have a vasectomy, but kept putting it off," Lisa says. "He was scheduled to go in just two weeks from when we found out I was pregnant again."

The nurse who tested Lisa told the doctor she had never seen a grown woman cry in disappointment about being pregnant. The doctor called Lisa at home out of concern.

"I literally told my OB that I would rather die than have another child," she says. "I was really stressed out. Subsequently he put me on Prozac."

Lisa is glad that she talked honestly with her doctor so that he could properly treat her.

"The medication helped me calm down enough to put things into perspective," she says.

Confiding in your closest friends

about your fears might help, too. When Patty Newbold from Doylestown, Pennsylvania found out she was pregnant

Studies estimate that 50 percent of pregnancies in America are unplanned. About 80 percent of the surprised women decide to continue with their pregnancies....

31 years ago, she turned to two friends. Each had been pregnant, and each made a different decision.

"Without knowing it, I had been pregnant for eight weeks," Patty recalls. "My husband and I had only two days to make a decision. I called my friends...The consequences were big

ones, so I wanted to hear what they thought of their earlier decisions five or six years later. It was an important two days. We made the decision to become parents. It was good to have the chance to choose, because we immediately stopped focusing on the surprise aspect and began looking forward to the baby aspect."

Step Two: Talk it up a little louder

Maybe you tried, but you couldn't control when you got pregnant.

But you can control how people find out.

"It is different to tell people about a surprise baby.

Some of our family members have had to process the news for a while as we did," says J.J. Schrambow, a mother from Milwaukee, Wisconsin who found out in August that Baby Number Three is on the way, due a few months before Number One will turn four and Number Two three. "We didn't tell people in

did you know...

1 IN 4 WOMEN SUFFER FROM HEAVY PERIODS

A number of conditions can cause heavy periods. If your periods are longer, heavier, or more bothersome than in the past, you may be a candidate for treatment.

Her Option Cryoablation Therapy:

- a 20 to 30 minute office procedure • Minimal Discomfort
- Fast Recovery • Effective



Center For Women's Health

Setting the Standard for compassion, innovation & excellence.

A DIVISION OF MID-ATLANTIC WOMEN'S CARE, LLC

12706 McManus Blvd. • Newport News • (Next to Mary Immaculate Hospital)
101 Eaton St., Ste. 300 • Hampton • (Across from Mill Point Park)

757-874-BABY (2229)

Cheri Coyle, MD • Douglas Thom, MD
Timothy O'Connell, MD • Ealena Callender, MD
Katy Richardson, COGNP

www.CenterForWomen.com



her
option
office cryoablation therapy

Her Option is not recommended for everyone. You will need to be evaluated by your doctor to find out if it is right for you. You will not be a candidate if you intend to become pregnant, use an IUD or suffer from uterine cancer, an active urinary infection, pelvic inflammatory disease, or if you have certain types of uterine abnormality. There is the potential for thermal injury to adjacent organs. Every medical treatment has risks and complications. Talk to your doctor.

big groups, but one-on-one. We made sure to preface the news with, 'We have some really happy news. It came as quite a surprise to us, but we are overjoyed.'"

The hardest response so far has been from J.J.'s sister, who was planning on having her third child soon.

"She has reacted with jealousy since this wasn't in her plan either," notes J.J. "It's interesting how people react when pregnancies occur outside of when they expect you to conceive. I know she'll come around."

Lisa and Adam Stone from Madison, Mississippi have faced envy as well, from about half the people they've told.

"The reaction seems to be divided along gender lines. The women we tell all giggle and are really happy for us," says Lisa Stone, who found out in July that her third baby is on its way, seven years after the child the couple thought would be their last child. "Even if some of them don't want more children, you can hear a little bit of envy in their voice with the idea of a new baby. The men say the right thing, but underneath it all, you can see the pity in their eyes."

Your friends might be envious or relieved

that they're not walking in your soon-to-be-spit-up-stained shoes, but chances are they'll help you in your moment (many, many moments!) of need.

"When I told my friends and family about my new baby (third child after a 10-year pause), they knew I was not happy to be pregnant," says Leita Spears from Fort Smith, Arkansas. "They all rallied around me and helped me get past the unexpected part. They started planning names and a baby shower and telling me stories of their third baby or surprise pregnancy. It helped me to adjust to my new future."

Step Three: Now talk it down

One day, your sweet little surprise might look up at you and ask, "was I a surprise?"

Or worse: "Was I an accident?"

As you look down and into his or hers sweet eyes, what will you say?

Marisa Vallbona from La Jolla, California, who got pregnant despite taking birth control pills religiously, told her almost 18-year-old son the truth, hoping he'll learn a couple of lessons.

"I caution him about the fact that when

you have sex with someone, even if you think you're protected, it can yield a lifetime commitment if a pregnancy occurs," she says. "Further, I have taught him that he is a very, very special boy to be in the world despite the obstacles he faced to be here."

Plus, being honest might just help your son or daughter if they experience their own "surprise" despite their best efforts.

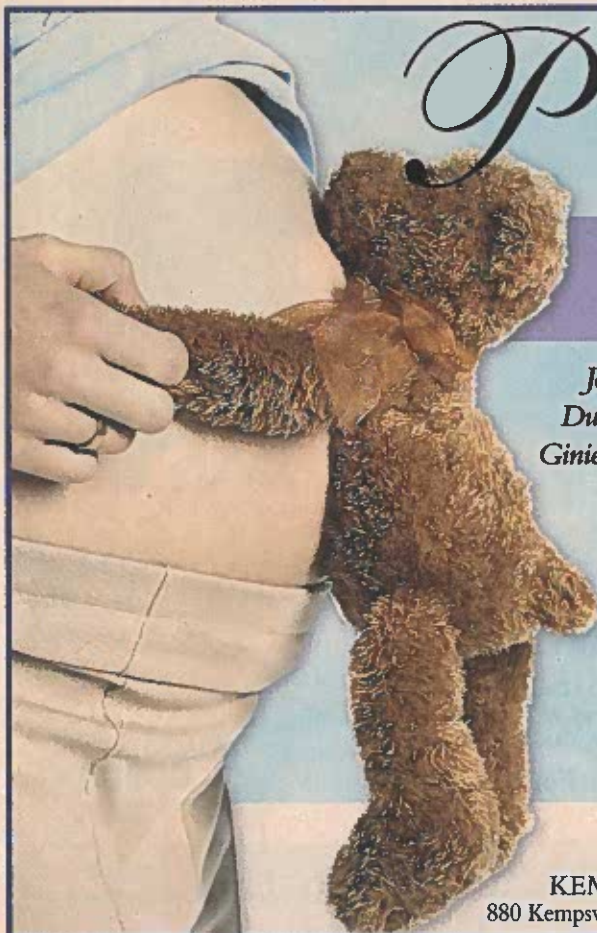
Karen Whiting from Grasonville, Maryland found that to be true when she learned that her fifth baby was on his way, eight years after his closest sibling.

"What helped me the most is to be from a family where this happened a lot," Karen says. "My grandmothers and one great-grandma used to tell me about their surprise cabooses."

If your unexpected "visitor" comes first instead of last in your family, and you wish to save face a little, you could just choose your words carefully.

Nate, the young father from Texas, has already thought about what he'll say:

"I don't think we will tell her that she was a surprise," he notes. "If she ever asks, we will probably tell her that she was a little early." **P**



Providing HealthCare to Women
of Hampton Roads for *100* years.

Obstetrics • Gynecology • Laparoscopic Hysterectomy
In-Office Sterilization (no incision, no general anesthesia)
Gynecological Urology • Pelvic Floor Reconstructive Surgery

Jon Crockford, MD | Holly Puritz, MD | Martha Fernandez, MD
Dwight Groves, MD | Jeffrey Wentworth, MD | Sharon Keverline, MD
Giniene Pirkle, MD | Daniel Noffsinger, MD | Denise Harris-Proctor, MD

Individual & Group Counseling for Women's Issue • Barbara Kersey, PhD
Nurse Midwife • Debra Alpert, CNM
Nurse Practitioners • Nancy Sinibaldi, WHNP & Charlette King, WHNP

**THE GROUP
FOR WOMEN**
A Division of Mid-Atlantic Women's Care, PLC

757.466.6350 • thegroupforwomen.com

KEMPSVILLE CHESAPEAKE NORFOLK
880 Kempsville Rd., Suite 2200 300 Medical Pkwy., Suite 308 250 W. Brambleton Ave., Suite 202