

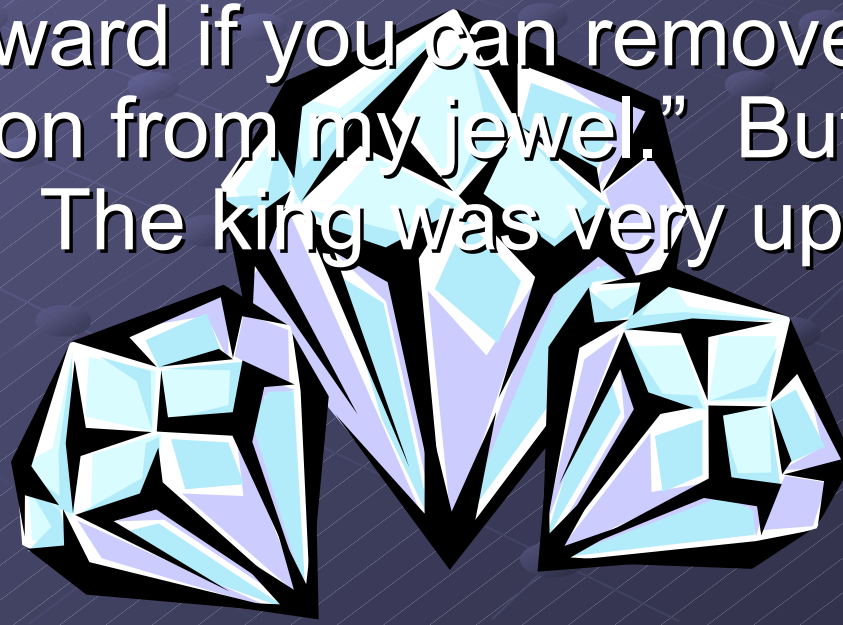
# Problem Pregnancies

Birth Defects



# The King and the Scratched Diamond

Once there was a king, who had a beautiful, large pure diamond. There was no other diamond like it in the world. One day, it became deeply scratched. The king called his best diamond cutters, “I’ll promise you a great reward if you can remove the imperfection from my jewel.” But they could not. The king was very upset.



Many months later, a man came to the king. He promised to make the diamond even more beautiful than it ever had been. Impressed by the man's confidence, the king consented. He watched as the man engraved an exquisite rosebud around the blemish and used the scratch to make its stem.

● --A parable of the Preacher of Dubno from Jewish folklore

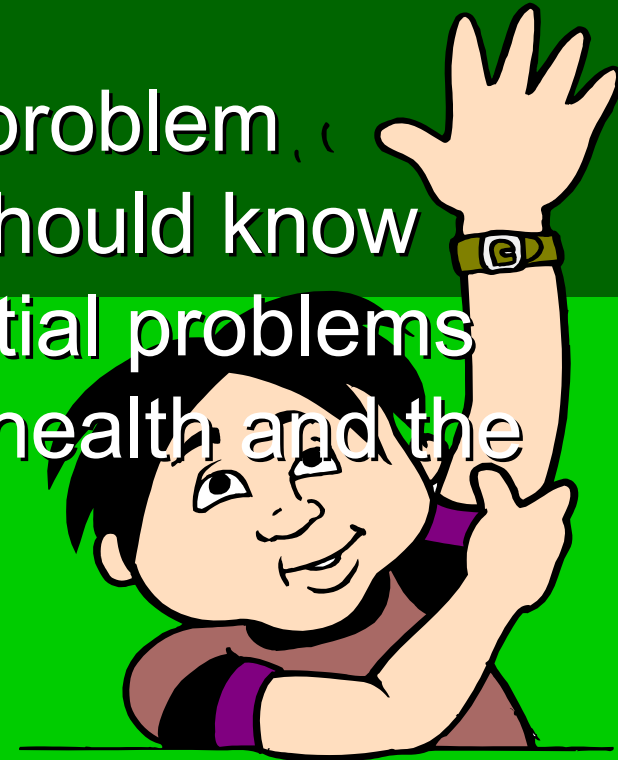
# Conclusion

- This story can easily be equated to birth defects. Even though a child with a birth defect may not appear to be perfect, he/she still has great abilities and opportunities to apply himself/herself in life. Rather than emphasizing the problem, we must focus on the abilities of the person

# Discussion

- How many of you know someone who has had a problem pregnancy?
- Did she ever think anything like that could happen to her?

No one plans on having a problem pregnancy, but everyone should know something about the potential problems in order to safeguard their health and the health of their fetus.





# FACTS

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- About 150,000 babies are born each year with birth defects.
- The parents of one out of every 28 babies receive the frightening news that their baby has a birth defect
- There are over 4,000 known birth defects
- Birth defects are the leading cause of death in the first year of life



# What is a Birth Defect?

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- An abnormality of structure, function or body metabolism (inborn error of body chemistry) present at birth that results in physical or mental disability or is fatal.

# What causes birth defects?



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- Both genetic and environmental factors can cause birth defect. However, the causes of about 60% of birth defects are currently unknown.
- A single abnormal gene can cause birth defects. Every human being has about 100,000 genes that determine traits like eye color, hair, etc.



# Can birth defects be prevented?

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- ❑ While the causes of most birth defects are not known, there are a number of steps a woman can take to reduce her risk of having a baby with a birth defect.
  - ❑ Visit a health care provider for a pre-pregnancy check up. Especially if a woman has health problems
  - ❑ When pregnant take daily multivitamin containing 400 mg of the B-vitamin folic Acid
  - ❑ Avoid alcohol, drugs, smoking, prescription or over-the-counter medication without checking with her health care provider.
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# Factors that contribute to Birth Defects:

- ▶ Overweight
- ▶ Underweight
- ▶ Jewish decent
- ▶ African American
- ▶ Last birth was less than 12 month ago
- ▶ Has had a baby that weighed less than d  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds
- ▶ Has had 3 or more miscarriages
- ▶ Has had more than 5 pregnancies
- ▶ Has had a still born baby

- ▶ Drinks alcohol
- ▶ Has personal habits that are different from most people
- ▶ Uses prescription drugs
- ▶ Has used street drugs
- ▶ Takes vitamins
- ▶ Drinks caffeine
- ▶ Has had exposure to chemicals
- ▶ Live in a home built before 1955
- ▶ Constant exposure to cats
- ▶ Has had x-rays during pregnancy

- ▶ High blood pressure
  - ▶ Diabetes
  - ▶ Hemophilia
  - ▶ Sickle cell anemia
  - ▶ Health problems:
- |                    |
|--------------------|
| Thalassemia        |
| Birth defects      |
| Mental retardation |
| Cystic Fibrosis    |

Genital herpes

Gonorrhea

Syphilis

Epilepsy

Diabetes

High blood pressure

Heart disease

Anemia

- ▶ No immunizations against rubella
- ▶ Rh factor
- ▶ Miscarriage



# Can some birth defects be diagnosed before birth?

- Some birth defects can be diagnosed before birth. Some prenatal tests that can be taken are:
  - Ultrasound
  - Amniocentesis
  - Chronic villus sampling

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## Can birth defects be treated before birth?

- Advances in prenatal therapy now make it possible to treat some birth defects before birth.
  - Prenatal surgery – urinary-tract blockages, rare tumors in the lungs, spina bifida, ph disease,
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# Types of Birth Defects

## 1. Malformations present at birth

defects such as congenital heart malformation, spina bifida (open spine), cleft palate, clubfoot

## 2. Inborn errors of metabolism

Defects such as PKU, Tay Sachs disease

## 3. Blood Disorders

Defects such as sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, thalassemia.

## 4. Chromosomal Abnormalities









Conditions such as Down's Syndrome, Klinefelter syndrome, Turner Syndrome.

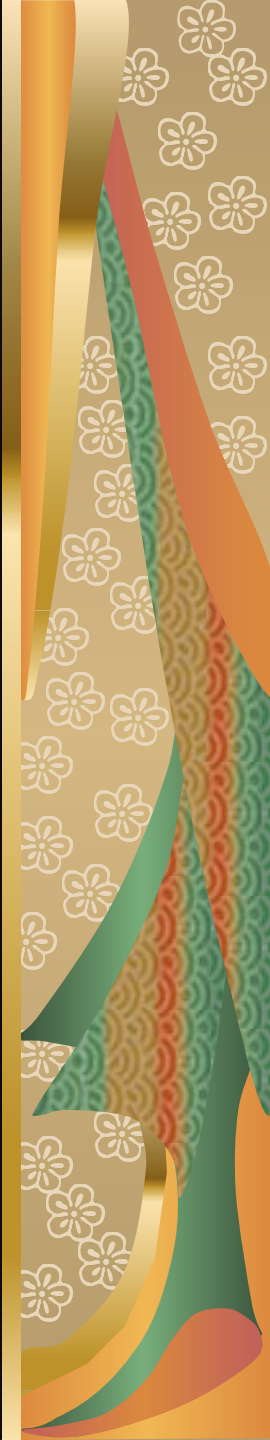
## 5. Prenatal damage

Cases include certain infections, drugs, maternal disorders such as diabetes, high blood pressure, Rh disease, umbilical cord accidents, difficult labor or delivery, premature birth.

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# Preventing Birth Defects

-  Nutrition
-  Alcohol
-  Smoking
-  Drugs
-  STDs
-  Rubella
-  Parasites
-  Radiation





# Student Reports

- Divide students into groups of 3.
- Students will review and collect information from the March of Dimes and other resources.
- Report to the class information gathered about assigned birth defect.