

YOUR PREGNANCY

GROW HEALTHY. STAY HEALTHY.™



<http://www.startsmartforyourbaby.com>

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Congratulations! You are going to have a baby! Having a baby is a special privilege. It is the beginning of the strongest of all bonds—the bond between a parent and child. For more information on prenatal care, visit us at <http://www.startsmartforyourbaby.com>.

YOUR FIRST OB VISIT

See your doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant. Studies show that getting prenatal care early can help you have a healthier baby.

AT YOUR FIRST PRENATAL VISIT:

Tell your doctor about any health problems you may have. List any medicines you take.

- Your doctor will do a physical exam.
- You may get to hear the baby's heartbeat.
- Your doctor may do an ultrasound.
- Your doctor will do a blood test.

Blood tests are very important to help your doctor learn about your health. Every pregnant patient should get these tests.

Make sure you ask all of the questions you would like to.

IN MOST CASES, YOUR PRENATAL VISITS WILL BE:

- Every 4 weeks during the first 29 weeks you are pregnant.
- Every 2 to 3 weeks from 30 to 36 weeks.
- After 36 weeks, every week until you deliver.

You should go to all of your prenatal visits, even if you are feeling well. Your health and the health of your baby depend on it.

YOUR CASE MANAGER CAN HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY

Most often a case manager is a nurse or a social worker who is assigned to certain members of a health plan. He or she can help you understand what is going on with your body during your pregnancy, offer emotional support, help you find resources, and work to keep your medical team informed about any health problems.

If you would like to speak to a case manager, you can reach the case management department through member services at your health plan.

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WIC PROGRAM?

WIC stands for Women, Infants, and Children. Pregnant women who qualify for the program can get free and healthy foods like cereal, juice, milk, cheese, eggs, beans, peas, peanut butter, carrots, and tuna. After your baby is born, you can also get formula on WIC. Talk to your doctor or local health department to learn more about WIC.

KEEPING YOUR GROWING BABY SAFE

As your precious baby grows inside your body, you will want to steer clear of anything that could harm your baby.

BOOZE IS BAD NEWS!

Do not drink any wine, beer, booze, or spirits when you are pregnant. Drinking alcohol can cause babies to have serious mental and physical defects for their whole life.

STREET DRUGS ARE DEADLY!

Using drugs can cause you health problems while you are pregnant. Even a little bit of a drug can be harmful.

QUIT SMOKING - GOOD FOR YOUR BABY!

Giving up cigarettes is one of the best things you can do for your baby. Smoking can cause very serious health problems for your unborn child. But did you know that being around someone who smokes (second-hand smoke) while you are pregnant can also cause harm to your baby? Make sure no one smokes around you or in your home.

SMOKING OR BEING NEAR SECOND-HAND SMOKE WHILE YOU ARE PREGNANT CAN:

- Slow down your baby's growth and development.
- Lower the amount of oxygen your baby gets.
- Raise the risk that your baby will be born too soon.
- Cause your baby to fuss and cry more.
- Cause your child to have more ear infections and colds.

QUIT SMOKING - GOOD FOR YOU!

IF YOU GIVE UP CIGARETTES, YOU WILL FEEL HEALTHIER TOO. YOU WILL QUICKLY SEE THAT YOU:

- Have more energy.
- Breathe easier.
- Enjoy the taste and smell of food more.
- Make more breast milk.

HELP WITH QUITTING

If you want to stop smoking for your baby's health and your health, ask your doctor and your health plan for help.

For free help, go to <http://www.smokefree.gov>, or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW. **If you can't quit, at least cut back.**

PROTECT YOUR BABY FROM OTHER DANGERS

BE SMART ABOUT WHAT YOU DO:

- Don't do hard, physical work. Avoid heavy lifting, pushing or pulling heavy loads, climbing stairs, and standing for long periods of time.

BE SMART ABOUT WHAT GOES INTO YOUR BODY:

- Talk to your doctor before taking any herbal medicines.
- Avoid working or being around harmful chemicals. They can cause birth defects or learning problems later in life.
- Limit caffeine. It's safe to have about 12 ounces of coffee each day.

TAKE STEPS TO LOWER STRESS

New studies show that very high stress raises the chance that your baby will be born too soon or too small. Other studies show that pregnant moms who are stressed and worried have a greater chance of having a baby with asthma and allergies.

HOW CAN YOU RELIEVE STRESS?

- Stay active and eat right.
- Do something you enjoy every day. Watch a movie, go for a walk, chat with a friend!
- If you feel yourself getting stressed, do something that relaxes you. Take some slow breaths, stretch, or put your feet up and close your eyes.
- Too much tension in your house? Talk to someone you trust. Try to stay with a friend or relative if the tension gets to be too much.
- If you are in an abusive relationship, talk to your doctor. Call this free hotline at 1-800-799-7233. This is the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

STAYING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Staying active while you are pregnant can make your labor and delivery easier. And it can help you maintain a healthy weight. Regular exercise while you are pregnant is very good for your health and your baby's health.

THE DO'S OF EXERCISE:

- Talk with your doctor before starting any exercise program. As you get further along, you may need to slow down.
- Try to exercise at least 2 to 3 times each week for 20 to 30 minutes each time.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after you exercise.

THE DON'TS OF EXERCISE:

- Don't exercise outside on very hot days.
- Don't lift heavy weights.

Listen to your body. Stop right away if you start to feel very tired, short of breath, or faint.

EATING WELL FOR BABY AND YOU

MAKING HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES:

- Choose fresh or canned fruits for a snack.
- Eat fresh or frozen vegetables instead of canned. They have less salt.
- Eat less fat. Go easy on butter and margarine and fried foods.
- Stay away from fast food.
- Avoid or limit foods and drinks with little nutritional value.

RISKY FOODS

Some foods can be risky for your baby. You should limit how much of them you have.

YOU CAN HAVE LIMITED AMOUNTS OF:

- Liver.
- Fish that do not contain too much mercury (salmon, tilapia, shrimp, and haddock). Do not eat more than two 6-ounce cans of white or albacore tuna or more than 6-ounces of tuna steak a week.

DANGEROUS FOODS

Other foods can be dangerous for your baby because they may contain harmful germs. You should not eat them at all.

DON'T EAT ANY:

- Raw or undercooked meat, chicken, turkey and sushi (raw fish).
- Fish that contains high levels of mercury (shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tile fish – also called golden or white snapper).
- Refrigerated smoked seafood like salmon (lox), whitefish or cod. These can be eaten if they are cooked or heated.
- Refrigerated pates or meat spreads.

DON'T DRINK ANY:

- Raw (unpasteurized) milk or foods made from it.
- Unpasteurized fruit or vegetable juices. These may say “fresh squeezed” on the label.

Beer, wine, and other alcoholic drinks can cause babies to have serious mental and physical defects for their whole life. Do not drink them while you are pregnant.

TAKING VITAMINS

PRENATAL VITAMINS:

- Help make sure that you have all of the ingredients your body needs to carry a healthy baby.
- Contain folate to help your baby's brain and spinal cord form well.
- Usually contain extra calcium and iron your body needs.

FEELING GOOD WHILE YOU ARE PREGNANT

MORNING SICKNESS

Women with morning sickness say they feel sick to their stomach. Some may vomit or throw up. Morning sickness can happen any time of day—not just mornings.

HOW LONG IT LASTS:

Morning sickness often begins during the first month. In most cases, it goes away by the end of the 16th week. It is almost always gone by week 20.

WHAT HELPS:

- Eat dry crackers in the morning.
- Eat plain foods like saltine crackers, broth, or gelatin if you feel sick to your stomach.
- Some caffeine free drinks such as ginger ale, ginger tea or peppermint tea help with a sick stomach.

STAY AWAY FROM:

- Spicy or fried foods.
- Greasy foods.

Eat 5 or 6 small meals throughout the day so that your stomach doesn't get empty.

HEARTBURN

Many women have heartburn while pregnant.

- Your hormones change how your whole digestive system works. Foods move slower through your system.
- Your growing womb also pushes on your stomach a little.

WHAT HELPS:

- Ask your doctor about safe antacids.
- Eat five or six small meals over the day.
- Wait an hour or two after you eat before lying down.
- When lying down, prop your head and back up with pillows.

TO AVOID GETTING HEARTBURN:

- Stay away from high fat foods and chocolate.
- Stay away from spicy foods if they bother you.
- Stay away from caffeine in teas, coffees and colas.

SWOLLEN ANKLES

You may develop swelling in your ankles, feet, and hands in the last few months. This is a result of high hormone levels in pregnancy – not because of excess salt in your diet.

WHAT HELPS:

- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water each day.
- Eat less salty foods and don't add salt to your food.
- Put your feet up and rest as often as you can. Do this a few times each day.

BACK PAIN

You may find that you have to lean back to keep your balance as your belly grows. This makes a curve in your lower back. The added stress on your muscles also leads to back pain.

WHAT HELPS:

- Stand up straight and push your shoulders back.
- Keep your back straight up and down when you lift things off the ground.
- Wear low-heeled shoes with good foot support.

FEELING TIRED

Most women feel very tired in the first few months. You may also be very tired during the final month or two. Listen to your body and get more rest!

WHAT HELPS:

- Take a nap or take a few rest periods each day.
- Get enough sleep.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Take your prenatal vitamins.
- Ask family or friends to help you with housework or tasks.

PRETERM LABOR—WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Preterm labor is also called premature labor. A baby born between weeks 20 and 37 is called a preemie. Most pregnancies are full term and last between 37 and 42 weeks.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF PRETERM LABOR!

It's important to know the signs of preterm labor. If you have any of these signs more than 3 weeks before your due date, you may be in preterm labor:

- Contractions that come as often as six times in an hour.
- Cramps that feel like you're having your period.
- A feeling of pressure in your pelvis or lower belly.
- Bleeding from your vagina, or a pink-tinged discharge while you are cramping.

If you think you are having preterm labor, call your doctor or go to the hospital right away.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A PRETERM BABY?

If you had a preterm baby in a prior pregnancy, talk to your doctor. There is a medicine called 17P that can prevent another preemie. 17P is a hormone shot. It can be started as early as 16 weeks and is given every week through 38 weeks.

If you are going to deliver electively (by your choice or the doctor's choice) do not have the delivery more than one week before your due date. Babies born prior to 39 weeks can have more problems.

DIABETES DURING PREGNANCY

Diabetes is a disease of high blood sugar. If your blood sugar is high during pregnancy, your doctor may tell you that you have gestational diabetes.

DURING THE FIRST TRIMESTER, DIABETES CAN RAISE THE CHANCE OF:

- Birth defects
- Miscarriage

DURING THE SECOND AND THIRD TRIMESTERS, DIABETES CAN INCREASE THE RISK THAT:

- Your baby will be very large, which can make labor and delivery hard.
- Your baby will have low blood sugar after birth.

High blood pressure can cause serious health problems for you and your baby. You need to get treatment right away.

PIH—HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE WHEN YOU ARE PREGNANT

PIH is short for pregnancy-induced hypertension. This health problem is a type of high blood pressure that can happen during your pregnancy. PIH is also called toxemia, or preeclampsia.

IF YOU HAVE PIH:

- Your blood pressure goes up to at least 140/90.
- Your body holds onto fluid. This causes swelling.
- There is protein in your urine.

WATCH OUT FOR THESE SIGNS THAT YOU MAY BE DEVELOPING PIH:

- Your hands, feet, and face are puffy.
- Your vision changes. For example, you may see bright lights or dark spots.
- You have pain on the upper right side of your belly.
- You have severe headaches.

If you have any of these warning signs, call your doctor right away. High blood pressure can cause serious health problems for you and your baby.

GIVING BIRTH TO MULTIPLES

Having twins or triplets? Carrying more than one baby can mean you will need to:

- Get extra rest and stay off your feet more after week 34.
- Ask for extra help with household chores if you need it.
- See your doctor more often than if you were carrying just one baby.

CHILDBIRTH AND PARENTING CLASSES

Taking childbirth and parenting classes can help prepare you and your partner for labor, birth, and being new parents.

WHY GO TO CHILDBIRTH CLASS?

Childbirth class teaches you and your partner what to expect during labor. You'll get a tour of the hospital too.

WHY GO TO PARENTING CLASS?

Parenting class helps you learn how to care for your new baby. You'll gain tips on when to call the doctor.

CHOOSING YOUR BABY'S DOCTOR

It is important to choose a pediatrician or family doctor. Call your health plan or talk to your OB for names if you need help.

HOW TO KNOW IF YOU ARE IN LABOR

It is important a long nine months, and you're eagerly awaiting the arrival of your baby. Learn the signs of labor and the difference between true and false labor.

SIGNS OF FALSE LABOR

Before true labor begins, you may feel your uterus tighten up. It may feel like a menstrual cramp. You're having Braxton-Hicks contractions. These are also called practice contractions, or false labor pains.

YOUR CONTRACTIONS ARE PROBABLY PRACTICE CONTRACTIONS IF THEY:

- Do not have a regular pattern.
- Are more than ten minutes apart.
- Are not painful.
- Go away after a short walk.
- Go away after drinking two glasses of water.

Practice contractions are okay if you are in your final month of pregnancy.

If you are having regular contractions more than one month before your due date, call your doctor right away. You may be in preterm labor.

SIGNS OF TRUE LABOR

RUPTURE OF MEMBRANES

This means that the bag of water around your baby has broken. You may feel fluid coming from your vagina. Some women feel a big gush. Others feel a little leaking. If you think your water has broken, don't use a tampon, get in the tub, or have intercourse. Call your doctor.

TRUE CONTRACTIONS

Unlike the practice contractions you had earlier in pregnancy, true contractions get stronger and more frequent. You can feel your entire womb squeezing. Some women say they feel like a belt is getting tighter and tighter around them.

Are the contractions coming less than 10 minutes apart? Do they take your breath away? This may mean that true labor has begun.

PAIN IN YOUR LOWER BACK

Are you getting pains in your lower back? Check to see if your womb is getting tight at the same time. If so, you may be having true contractions.

If you have any of these signs more than 3 weeks before your due date, call your doctor right away. You may be in preterm labor.

INDUCED LABOR

Your doctor may want to get your labor started. This is called induction.

HERE ARE SOME REASONS YOU MIGHT BE INDUCED:

- You are a week or more past your due date.
- You have very high blood pressure.
- You have a health problem like diabetes.
- There are problems with your baby's health.

Do not have an elective (planned) induction before 39 weeks. Talk about the pros and cons with your doctor.

MANAGING PAIN DURING DELIVERY

There are many different medicines for pain control during childbirth.

ANALGESICS

These pain medicines take the edge off mild contractions. You may get them through an IV.

EPIDURAL ANESTHESIA

When you are in a good strong labor, some women choose to have an epidural to manage pain. It is a safe and effective method.

HAVING A C-SECTION

Most babies are born through their mother's birth canal, or vagina. But about 1 in every 4 babies in the U.S. is born by C-Section, or Cesarean section.

WHEN IS A C-SECTION DONE?

Sometimes problems before or during labor make vaginal delivery too risky. If this happens, a C-Section will be done.

You may know ahead of time that you will have a C-Section. Or it may be an emergency.

Do not have a scheduled (repeat) C-section before 39 weeks.

BREAST MILK OR FORMULA?

One of the important choices you will need to make is whether to give your baby breast milk or formula.

WHY BREASTFEED?

GOOD FOR BABY!

Breast milk is the perfect food for babies. It is packed with the right mix of nutrients and proteins that can keep your baby from getting sick.

GOOD FOR YOU!

Nursing can also help protect your health. Moms who breastfeed have a lower chance of getting breast cancer in the future.

COULD BREASTFEEDING BE A GOOD CHOICE FOR YOU? YOU'D LIKE TO BREASTFEED:

- To bond and feel closer with my baby.
- To save money. I won't have to buy formula or bottles.
- To save time. I won't have to wash bottles or to go to the store to buy formula.

IF YOU BREASTFEED YOUR BABY

If possible, nurse your baby for the first time within one or two hours after you give birth. Use a breast pump if your baby is not going to be with you for the first few hours. This will get your milk started.

Talk with your nurse or a lactation consultant who can watch and help you be sure that everything is going well.

IF YOU USE FORMULA

If you can't or choose not to breastfeed your baby, formula is the way to go. Most formulas are very good and can meet your baby's nutrition needs. Your doctor and the hospital staff can help you choose a formula that is right for your baby.

Good luck on your pregnancy and on bringing a new life into this world. Becoming a mother is a grand journey!