



Your guide to a **healthy pregnancy**



Molina My Health
Healthy Beginnings

Congratulations!

All of us at Molina Healthcare want to help you have a healthy pregnancy. We're here for you every step of the way!

When you need support during pregnancy, we're here. You can call us at (866) 891-2320 (TTY: 711) anytime you need help or want to learn more.

What's inside?

Steps to a healthy pregnancy and baby

- Page **3** Step 1: Get started with an OB
- Page **4** Step 2: Get extra services for you and your baby
- Page **5** Step 3: Healthy eating choices
- Page **7** Step 4: Healthy teeth and gums
- Page **8** Step 5: Make healthy choices, avoid unsafe ones

Getting help

- Page **11** Getting help with unsafe habits
- Page **13** Protect yourself and your baby from interpersonal violence
- Page **14** Things that are unsafe during pregnancy

Things to know

- Page **16** Warning signs
- Page **16** Emotional warning signs
- Page **17** 1st trimester
- Page **18** 2nd trimester
- Page **19** 3rd trimester
- Page **20** Getting prepared

Choices for your baby

- Page **23** Your baby's pediatrician
- Page **24** Safe travel tips and car seats
- Page **25** Safe sleep
- Page **26** Breastfeeding
- Page **26** Bottle feeding

Back at home

- Page **27** Let your body heal
- Page **28** Baby blues or postpartum depression?
- Page **29** All babies cry
- Page **30** Your postpartum visit
- Page **31** Why are immunizations so important?

**Keep our
phone number
handy:
(866) 891-2320
TTY: 711**



Steps to a healthy pregnancy and baby

Step 1: Get started with an OB

You need to see an obstetrician (OB) as soon as you find out you're pregnant. It's important to start prenatal care early and get regular care during pregnancy and the 8 weeks after delivery. Be open and honest with your OB about your medical history and life. The more your OB knows, the more they can help you.

Need help finding an OB or making an appointment?

Call us at (866) 891-2320 (TTY: 711). If you want to change your OB, we can help you find a new one.

What to expect during your 1st prenatal visit

Your first prenatal visit will take more time than other visits. Someone in the office or your OB doctor should:

- Check your heart rate, blood pressure and temperature
- Get a urine and blood sample
- Ask you about:
 - Past pregnancies. This is important so your OB will know if you could be at high risk.
 - Your last period to decide your due date.
 - Your health, the health of your baby's father and your family's health.
 - Your habits and lifestyle choices.
 - Any medicines you take. This includes prescription and over-the-counter.
- Talk with you about things that are unsafe for you and your baby.
- Do a pelvic exam.
- Talk about any risks for you or your baby and ways to treat them.
- Tell you how and when to contact them for any questions or issues during pregnancy.

What to expect during your follow-up prenatal visits

Your follow-up prenatal visits will take less time. Your OB or someone in the office will:

- Check your heart rate, blood pressure and temperature
- Get a urine sample
- Check your weight gain
- Measure the size of your uterus (fundal height) to track how your baby is growing
- Listen to your baby's heartbeat
- Ask if you can feel your baby move
- Draw blood if needed
- Review warning signs with you

Your OB follow-up visits are key!

These visits can keep you and your baby healthy. Your OB can find and treat health problems early when they see you regularly.



Step 2: Get extra services for you and your baby

As a Molina member, you qualify for Women Infants and Children (WIC) benefits. WIC is a federal program that pays for healthy foods, milk and juices during and after pregnancy. WIC counselors can give you advice on nutrition and breastfeeding.

If you want to apply, contact your local WIC office. You can also download the WICShopper app on your phone. The app shows you how to use your WIC benefits.



Step 3: Healthy eating choices



The best way to teach your baby how to eat healthy is for you to eat healthy during pregnancy. Eat a variety of foods and a rainbow of colors at each meal. This will make the fluid around your baby healthy. Your baby will also learn to like the taste of healthy foods.

Eat five or six small meals with:

- **Iron-rich foods** (lean meats, foods with added iron and dark, leafy vegetables). These foods are good for your heart and blood.
- **Vegetables and fruits of all colors** (melons, tomatoes and sweet peppers). These food have important vitamins such as potassium, which helps with muscle cramps.
- **Whole grain and high-fiber foods** (100% whole wheat bread and cereals, brown rice and oats). These foods keep your bowels moving and help lower your risk of hemorrhoids.
- **Protein foods** (lean meats, fish, chicken and foods that WIC approves). These foods help your baby grow and give you energy.
- **Calcium-rich foods** (low-fat milk and yogurts and low-fat cheeses like ricotta or low-fat mozzarella). These foods give you healthy bones and teeth.
- **Small amounts of healthy fats** (avocado, nuts and olive oil). These foods give you energy.
- Some healthy snacks are okay in between meals (fat-free popcorn, low-fat yogurt or raw fruits and vegetables).

On top of a healthy diet, take your prenatal vitamin every day with food. If your prenatal vitamins make you sick, tell your OB.



Foods to limit or cut out

No more than 1 a week during pregnancy

- Sugary foods (doughnuts, desserts and sodas)
- Artificial sweeteners
- Fried foods or red meats
- French fries
- Potato chips
- Canned tuna fish
- Caffeine (coffee, sodas, tea and chocolate)
- Foods high in salt



If you crave non-food items like dirt, clay or paper, talk to your OB right away. This is known as Pica and could harm you and your baby.

Never during pregnancy

- Beer, wine or alcohol
- Undercooked meats
- Undercooked eggs (sunny-side-up or over-easy)
- Raw fish or sushi
- Sea fish with mercury in it (swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel or shark)
- Cheese that hasn't been processed at a dairy factory (cow, goat, blue, feta and brie)
- Raw honey
- Organ meats like liver
- Lunch meat
- Energy drinks



Stay hydrated by drinking at least eight cups (64 ounces) of water each day.

You can drink one cup of pasteurized fruit juice and/or milk per day. Nonfat or low-fat/skim milk and 100% fruit juice are best during pregnancy.





Step 4: Healthy teeth and gums

Keeping your teeth and gums healthy is important for you and your baby. If you're pregnant and have gum disease, your baby could be born too early or too small.

Brush and floss twice a day. Keep up with your preventive dental visits - it's ok and recommended that you go to the dentist for a check up and cleaning during pregnancy. Just be sure to tell them you are pregnant. It is important for them to know if they need to take an x-ray of your teeth.

If you are pregnant and have gum disease, your baby could be born too early. Sometimes gum disease is painful, but not always. You might have gum disease and not even know it.

Signs of Gum Disease

- Your gums bleed when you brush your teeth
- Red, swollen or tender gums


If you have any of these signs, call your dentist and get an appointment. Keep brushing and flossing every day.

We cover dental cleanings every six months. If you need help finding a dentist, please call Member Services at (800) 578-0603 (TTY: 711).

Step 5: Make healthy choices, avoid unsafe ones

Tobacco or nicotine use

There is **NO** amount of nicotine or tobacco that is safe during pregnancy. Using any kind of product like cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes or vaping, dip or chew, or being around someone who smokes or vapes can cause complications during pregnancy. When you use tobacco or nicotine products during pregnancy, your baby gets less oxygen.

Tobacco or nicotine use can increase your risk of having:	Tobacco or nicotine can increase your baby's risk of having:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A miscarriage or stillbirth• A baby being born too soon or too small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crib death, also called Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SIDS/SUID)• Ear and lung infections• Lifelong learning problems

Secondhand or thirdhand smoke

Secondhand smoke is when you are around someone who is smoking, and you breathe in the smoke they exhale. It can cause:

- Low birth weight
- SIDS/SUID
- Ear infections
- Lung problems
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Increases your baby's chances of going to the hospital for bronchitis or pneumonia

Thirdhand smoke is when the gas and particles from smoke sticks to surfaces like hair, skin, clothes, toys or furniture. If you or anyone smokes inside your house – **stop!**

A fan or air freshener will not remove secondhand or thirdhand smoke.



Stopping tobacco or nicotine use will not only improve your health and the health of your baby, it will also:

- Lessen morning sickness
- Give your baby more oxygen
- Lower your risk of a miscarriage or stillbirth
- Reduce complications during and after delivery
- Lower the risk of your baby being born too early or too small
- Lower the risk for SIDS/SUID

Relapse

Relapse is when you start tobacco or nicotine use again after you've stopped. It can happen. Lots of people start again. The first few days after you quit are the hardest. But the symptoms are a sign that your body is starting to recover!

Take one day at a time and reward yourself for success. Remind yourself why you stopped smoking. **Quitting smoking is the best gift you can give your baby! It's never too late to quit smoking.**

Want more information on how to quit? Go to the end of the next section.

Exercise during pregnancy

Regular exercise helps you adjust to the changes your body is going through during pregnancy. Exercise can relax you and get you ready for labor and delivery. Talk with your OB about the kinds of exercise you can do. Unless your OB says not to, try to exercise for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

Overall conditioning like walking, swimming or biking is very good for you. These exercises increase your pulse rate, condition your body and strengthen your heart.



No matter what exercise you do, try to walk whenever you can. You can also try:

- Taking a lunchtime walk in the park with a friend if you're working.
- Parking away from the store entrance and walk the extra distance when you go shopping.
- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator when you can.

Alcohol

No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy.

Any type of alcohol (beer, wine, liquor) can cause complications during pregnancy. If you drink alcohol, it reaches your baby through the placenta. Exposure to alcohol can seriously harm your baby. It can:

- Stunt the growth of your baby's mind and body
- Increase your risk for complications
- Cause your baby to be born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)

Alcohol and FAS can increase your baby's risk of:

- Being born too early or too small
- Having withdrawal symptoms (these babies must stay in the hospital when mom goes home)
- Having birth defects
- Having lifelong medical and learning problems

To get help quitting alcohol, go to the end of the next section.





Pills, medicines and other substances

Some medicines are safe to use during pregnancy, like medicine to treat long-term conditions such as asthma, thyroid disease, diabetes or epilepsy.

Not all natural or home remedies are safe during pregnancy. Herbal, home remedies and aromatherapy could harm your baby.

Things you should always do:

- Check with your OB before taking any medicine (including herbal and home remedies)
- Tell your OB about any medicines or treatments you get from other doctors
- Only use over-the-counter medicines if your OB approves them and use them as little as possible
- Ask your OB about alternative pain medicine after delivery

What is Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) or Neonatal Opiate Withdrawal (NOWS)?

NAS or NOWS is when your baby is exposed to any of these during pregnancy:

- Painkillers (opioids)
- Antidepressants
- Sleeping pills (benzodiazepines)
- Illicit street drugs (weed, ecstasy, cocaine and heroin)

It's important to let your OB know if you are using anything that can cause NAS or NOWS. Stopping too quickly can harm you and your baby.

Substances that cause NAS or NOWS can also increase the risk of:

- Miscarriage or stillbirth
- Birth defects
- Your baby being born too early or too small
- Withdrawal symptoms
- SIDS/SUID
- Lifelong learning and behavior problems

Child Protective Services (CPS) might get involved if they think a baby is unsafe. Work with your OB to show that you want your baby to be safe.

Getting help

Getting help with unsafe habits

You are four times more likely to quit unsafe habits if you have support. You can trust your OB! Tell your OB about any unsafe habits you struggle with and ask for help.

How to get ready to quit

- Avoid people and situations that make you want to do the habit. Change your routine if you need to so you can avoid these triggers.
- Think about the bad things that can happen if you keep doing these unsafe habits
- Think about the good things that will happen if you stop
- Ask for help and support from your friends, family and OB
- Make a list of things to help distract you if you feel an urge. You might:
 - Talk to your baby and tell them how much you love them, and you want the best for them
 - Remind yourself of the good things that can happen if you stop
 - Take a walk
 - Search the internet for happy videos
 - Play a game on your cell phone
 - Call a positive friend for support
 - Go for a drive
 - Call one of the phone numbers on the next page
- Praise yourself for the progress you have made so far
- Take it one day or even one hour at a time.



We cover behavioral health benefits!

Help is available 24 hours a day:

Passport's Behavioral Health Line:
(844) 800-5154

Health National Suicide Prevention
and Crisis Line:
988



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TOO QUIT!



Tips to help you quit using tobacco or nicotine:

- Get motivated. Find your reason to stop.
- Plan in advance. Talk to friends and family members and ask for their support.
- Talk to your doctor about help with quitting such as counseling and medication.
- Call (800) QUIT NOW at (800) 784-8669
- Visit women.Smokefree.gov
- Visit heart.org



Tips to help you quit drinking:

- Talk to your doctor
- Call the National Helpline at (800) 662-HELP or (800) 662-4357
- Visit Findtreatment.gov
- Visit aa.org



Tips to help with substance use, misuse, or abuse

- Talk to your doctor
- Call the National Helpline at (800) 662-HELP or (800) 662-4357
- Visit Findtreatment.gov
- Visit Findhelpnowky.org/
- Visit NA.org (Narcotics Anonymous)

Protect yourself and your baby from interpersonal violence

Not all relationships are healthy and supportive. Abuse is when someone is hurting you in any way. There are different types of abuse. Abuse can be mental, emotional, physical or sexual. An abuser can be anybody in your life.

Protect yourself from abuse — it's the best thing for you and your baby!

Examples of abuse

When someone:

- Makes fun of you, calls you names or puts you down
- Controls where and when you go somewhere
- Controls how you get food, money, sleep or other resources
- Keeps you away from friends or family
- Blames you for their frustrations or anger
- Accuses you of being unfaithful
- Threatens you or your family
- Demands to know where you are at all times
- Destroys your favorite things
- Pushes, shoves, slaps or throws things at you
- Kicks or chokes you
- Leaves marks or bruises on you
- Forces you to do things you don't want to, including sexual acts



How to handle abuse:

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. You and your baby have the right to be safe!
- Talk to someone you trust like your OB, a family member, friend or call one of the numbers on this page.

Things to know:

- Know how to quickly exit your home through doors and windows.
- Tell a trusted neighbor what to do, like call the police, if something happens.
- Know where you will go if you must leave.
- Your children have a high chance of being abused by the same person that is abusing you. The risk is even higher if your partner is not the child's parent.
- Children in an abusive home have a higher chance of becoming an abuser and having drug or alcohol problems later in life.

Abuse is not your fault. You are not alone. Help is available!

Who can I call for help?

You can call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 799-7233 or visit [ZeroV.org](https://www.ZeroV.org).



Things that are unsafe for you during pregnancy

Lead Exposure and Screening

Lead poisoning is caused by breathing in dust from or swallowing items that have lead in them.

Lead can be found in:

- Paint and dust in and around homes built before 1978
- Some things made in other countries like toys, jewelry, candy, makeup, spices, and glazed dishes
- Leaded crystal bowls, vases, pitchers, and glasses
- Drinking water from lead pipes and faucets

Certain jobs can put you at risk for lead exposure like auto refinishing, construction, and plumbing.

Too much lead isn't good for you or for your baby. It can cause:

- Miscarriage
- Your baby to be born too early or too small
- Damage to your baby's brain, kidneys and nervous system
- Longer term learning or behavior problems for your child

To protect you and your baby from too much lead:

1. Watch out for chipping paint in your home. Lead based paint chips instead of peeling and eventually breaks down into lead dust in your home. Do not try to remove lead paint if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Talk to your OB about the age of your home. Call your local health department for help if you think your home has lead in it.
2. Avoid work or hobbies that could put you at risk: home renovation on homes older than 1978, battery manufacturing, working in recycling centers, shooting or working at firing ranges, pottery that needs to be glazed. If someone who lives with you does these things, they should change into clean clothes before coming home and keep their work shoes outside the house.
3. Take shoes off at the door if you have walked through dirt or mud. Dirt can have lead from paint or other sources in it.
4. Avoid products brought into the country by others that are not sold in standard grocery stores, etc.
5. Do not cook or serve food on dishes that may have lead glaze, pewter or brass containers or utensils, or leaded crystal.
6. Tell your OB about any medicines, vitamins, supplements, or home remedies you are taking. Your OB can check for lead risk.
7. A few women feel craving to eat dirt or clay during pregnancy – tell your doctor right away if you do.
8. Eat foods with calcium, iron and vitamin C – pasteurized low fat milk and cheese, lean red meat, beans, oranges, peppers, tomatoes are examples. These foods may help keep lead from getting into your baby's body while they are growing inside you.

Finally, your OB can screen your blood for lead to see if you or your baby is at risk. They may ask you questions about your risk first or include the screening in your normal prenatal labs.

Never do this during pregnancy	Why?
 <p>Don't change or clean a cat litter box or be around one during and after the cat uses it.</p>	<p>Cats can carry a parasite that can cause toxoplasmosis that can hurt your baby.</p>
 <p>Don't douche.</p>	<p>Douching can wash away good bacteria and increase your risk of yeast infection. It also can introduce an infection to your baby.</p>
 <p>Don't take bubble baths.</p>	<p>Bubble baths can cause urinary tract irritation and infection.</p>
 <p>Don't get around people who are sick.</p>	<p>You can get sick.</p>
 <p>Don't use hot tubs, steam rooms, or saunas.</p>	<p>These things are dangerous during pregnancy. They can cause your placenta to pull away from the uterus (placental abruption). This can threaten your life and your baby's life.</p>
 <p>Don't do impact or jumping sports or ride animals.</p>	
<p>Don't ride jarring rides like roller coasters or bumper cars.</p>	
<p>Don't do hard physical work like lifting, pushing or pulling heavy loads.</p>	
<p>Don't use dangerous machinery like chainsaws or jackhammers.</p>	
 <p>Don't touch lizards, snakes, or turtles.</p>	<p>They have harmful bacteria on their skin called salmonella.</p>

Things to know

Warning signs

What are the warning signs of a problem during pregnancy?

- Regular contractions — when you feel like your belly is tightening up like a ball. You might have contractions with or without pain.
- Vaginal bleeding
- Bloody show – mucus with a small blood streak (this is normal after 37 weeks)
- Leaking of fluid from the vagina
- Vaginal discharge that changes in color, odor or amount
- Low, dull backache
- Pelvic pressure or pressure between your legs or in your thighs
- Your baby does not move as much as before or stops moving
- Stomach pain with or without diarrhea
- Cramping that feels like a period
- Burning or pain when urinating
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Blurred vision, seeing spots or other vision changes
- Headache that does not go away
- Vomiting or diarrhea that does not stop
- Chills, a rash or fever
- Sudden swelling in your face or hands
- Sudden increase in swelling in your feet or legs

If you have any of these warning signs or if you don't feel right, call your OB right away! Your OB may want to see you or send you to the hospital.

Emotional warning signs

The way you think and feel are part of your health. Having a healthy mind and emotions are important for you and your baby. Most pregnant women have mood swings during pregnancy and after delivery.

Talk to your OB if you:

- Feel sad most of the time or it lasts at least two weeks
- Have a history of depression or anxiety
- Have any new symptoms of depression or anxiety

Moms with mental health needs have a higher risk of pregnancy complications. These complications can put you and your baby at risk.

You're not alone! You can still have a healthy pregnancy with mental health needs. Don't hide how you're feeling. Someone can help you when they know you need it.

If you have any thoughts of hurting yourself or someone else, call 911.



Your 1st Trimester

(Weeks 1 to 12 | Months 1 to 3)

- If you're not taking prenatal vitamins yet, start taking them every day.
- You should see your doctor within the first three months of your pregnancy to get off to a healthy start. After your first visit your OB will want to see you every month. These prenatal visits are important to monitor your and your baby's health as your pregnancy progresses.
- Hormones can make you feel sick to your stomach. This is called morning sickness, but it can happen at any time of the day. If you have morning sickness:
 - Keep snacks like crackers or almonds with you
 - Eat five or six small meals during the day instead of three regular-sized meals
- It's okay to have mood swings. Your body is going through a lot of changes.
- Call your OB if you have any warning signs. If you're not sure if something is a warning sign, call our 24-hour Nurse Advice Line at (800) 606-9880 (TTY: (800) 688-4889).
- Talk to your OB before using any home remedies.

Questions and notes about my 1st trimester:



Did you know?

- About 25% of pregnant women can develop a subchorionic hematoma. This is when blood forms between the wall of the uterus and the chorionic membrane during pregnancy. Subchorionic hematomas are most common during weeks 10 to 20 of pregnancy. They make up about 10% of all vaginal bleeding. Most hematomas are not a cause for concern.
- 1 in 4 women lose their pregnancy before week 20. If this happens, help is available for you:
 - You can call Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
 - You can also learn more at Nationalshare.org and Pregnancyloss.org.

Your 2nd trimester

(Weeks 13 to 26 | Months 4 to 6)

- Your OB will want to see you every month.
- You may be ready to wear maternity clothes.
- Your OB will do an ultrasound to find your baby's organs and make sure they're growing properly. They might be able to see if you're having a girl or boy. If you don't want to know the sex of your baby, tell them before they do the test!

Here's what you can expect:

- Someone will draw your blood to check your baby's brain and spinal cord. This is called Alpha-Fetoprotein (AFP).
 - You will get a glucose tolerance test (GTT). This checks to see how your body is controlling your blood sugar now that you're pregnant. It's usually done around 24 to 28 weeks. If you have a history of diabetes, your OB may do it as early as 13 to 14 weeks.
 - You should not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the test.
 - The lab will draw your blood after you drink a glucose solution.
 - Your OB may want to do other tests. They will explain what the tests are, ask for your permission and tell you why they want to do the tests.
- **It's too early for delivery.** Call your OB if you have any warning signs! If you're not sure if something is a warning sign, call our 24-hour Nurse Advice Line at (800) 606-9880 (TTY: (800) 688-4889).
 - Drink at least eight glasses of water every day.
 - As your belly gets bigger, your balance will be off. Take extra care when using bathtubs and stairs.
 - Talk to your OB about finding and signing up for prenatal classes.
 - Ask your OB when and how to start keeping track of your baby's movements.



Questions and notes about my 2nd trimester:

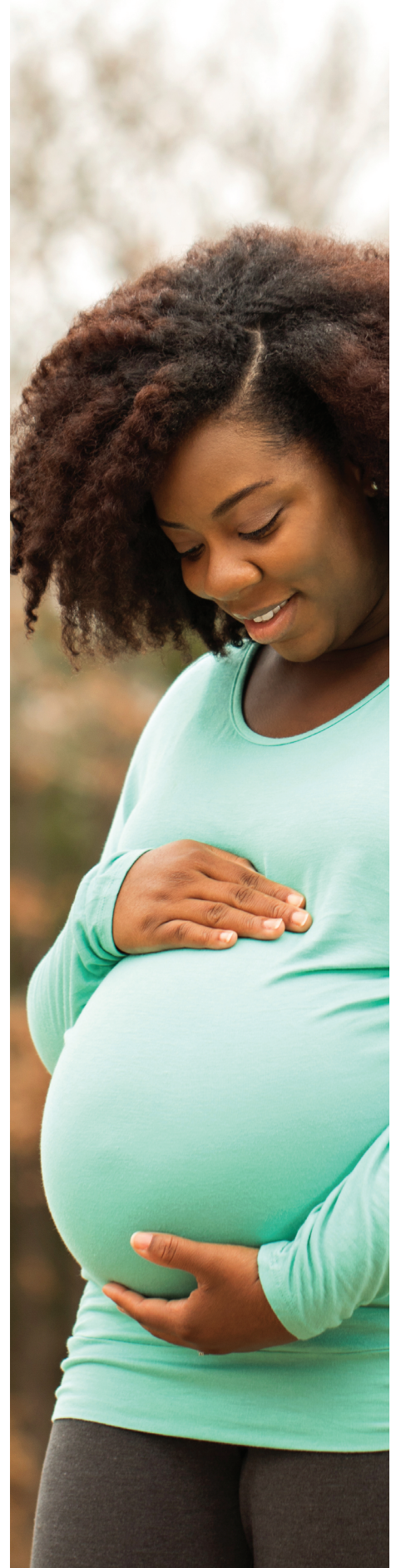


Your 3rd trimester

(Weeks 27 to 40 | Months 7 to 9)

- If you haven't had a glucose tolerance test yet, your OB should schedule one for you.
- Talk to your OB about finding and signing up for prenatal classes.
- You need two visits during both your 7th and 8th month of pregnancy.
- Talk to your OB about creating a birth plan together. This plan helps your OB understand what your wishes are for your delivery.
- You need weekly visits during your 9th month of pregnancy.
- If you have any pregnancy complications, your OB may see you more often and may do extra tests. These visits are important for you and your baby.
- Your baby will kick and stretch, respond to light and sounds and weigh about five or six pounds.
- Your OB might do a swab of your vagina around 36 weeks. This makes sure there are no infections that could be unsafe for your baby during delivery. You might not know you have an infection.
- If you think you've had contractions, your OB may want to check your cervix.
- If you haven't had any contractions, you can ask your OB to not check your cervix.
- If you're having signs of labor or any warning signs, call your OB right away. If you're unsure if something is a warning sign, call our 24-hour Nurse Advice Line at (800) 606-9880 (TTY: (800) 688-4889).
- A healthy pregnancy could last longer than 40 weeks. If this happens, you might have two visits a week.

Questions notes Notes about my 3rd trimester:





Getting prepared

Ways to get prepared and things to know

- Pack a bag for the hospital in your 3rd trimester.
- If you go into labor on your own and your contractions aren't happening often enough or dilating your cervix, your OB might give you medicine to help start your labor.
- Your OB may decide to start your labor for you. This is called induction. Some reasons for this are:
 - You're past your due date
 - Your blood pressure is too high
 - You have other health problems
 - Your water has broken, but labor hasn't started
 - Your baby has health problems
- Labor is coming too soon if you have:
 - Lightening or dropping (your baby had dropped or settled deeper into your pelvis)
 - Bloody show (mucus with streaks of blood)
 - An increase in energy and/or feeling like you really need to get everything done (also called nesting)



Braxton Hicks vs. true labor

There is a difference between false labor (Braxton Hicks) and true labor. The chart on this page will give you all the details!

False labor (Braxton Hicks)	True labor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irregular contractions• Does not get stronger or become more frequent• Goes away when you drink water, walk or change positions• Does not dilate the cervix	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular contractions that become stronger and more frequent• Might start in your back and hug around to your belly• Does not go away when you drink water, walk or change positions• Dilates the cervix

If you have any labor signs before 37 weeks, call your OB right away!

Things to know:

- If your water breaks, it might be a small amount of fluid or a gush. It can be clear, green, yellow or blood-tinged. Call your OB and go straight to the hospital. Do not take a bath or insert a tampon.
- If you think you're in labor, start timing your contractions and call your OB. They will ask you about your contractions.
 - You'll need something to record time, such as your cell phone.
 - Time your contractions from the start of one to the start of the next one. This tells you how often they are coming.
 - Time each contraction from start to finish. This tells you the length of each contraction.
 - **Do not drive yourself** to the hospital if you're in labor. Have a friend or family member drive you and wear your seatbelt. If you don't have anyone to drive you, call 911.
 - Go straight to the hospital if your water has broken, you have heavy vaginal bleeding or if you don't feel your baby moving.



Types of deliveries

Vaginal delivery

- This is when the baby passes through the vagina or birth canal.
- Most women have vaginal deliveries.
- During labor, contractions will dilate your cervix until it is completely open or dilated. You will push your baby out of your vagina.

Cesarean section (C-section) delivery

- This is when your baby is born through surgery. Your baby is born through a cut that your OB makes in your belly and uterus.
- Sometimes your OB knows ahead of time that your baby cannot be safely delivered through the vagina. When this happens they will talk to you about scheduling a C-section before your due date.
- If something unplanned happens during labor, you might need a C-section. Some reasons for an unplanned C-section are:
 - You're in labor too long or your cervix won't dilate
 - You or your baby do not tolerate labor (distress)

If you have a C-section:

- You might not get to hold your baby right away
- The nurse or pediatrician might take the baby to the nursery to watch them closely for a few hours
- Once the surgery is over, you will go to the recovery room
- You may have to wait until you are in your regular room for the nurse or pediatrician to bring you your baby.

Vaginal birth after C-section (VBAC)

This refers to vaginal delivery of a baby after a previous pregnancy was delivered by C-section. You and your OB should discuss early in your pregnancy whether you're a good candidate for this. Your OB can help you choose what is best for your body and for your baby.

Recovery time

Your baby may stay in the room with you all, most, or part of the time while you are recovering. A nurse or other staff will show you how to take care of your baby. This includes feeding, safe sleep, cord care and giving baths.

One to two days after a vaginal delivery

- Staff will check your vitals regularly and show you how to care for yourself. This includes ice packs, sitz bath, numbing spray and pain relief.
- Staff will give you personal care items to take home.

Two to four days after a C-section

- Staff will check your incision and vital signs regularly and show you how to care for yourself. If you pushed before your surgery, someone will show you how to care for your vaginal area.
- Staff will give you personal care items to take home.





Choices for baby

Your baby's pediatrician

- A pediatrician is a doctor who cares for children from birth to early adulthood.
- A family primary care provider (PCP) is a doctor who provides care from birth to old age.
- Choosing your baby's doctor, a pediatrician or a family PCP, is a big decision. You want to be happy with your choice and trust their care.
- You'll want to choose your baby's doctor before you deliver and make sure they're accepting new patients. Your baby will need to see the doctor very soon after birth.
- If you already have children and are happy with their doctor, you can take your newborn to the same doctor.
- Ask friends, family, neighbors or co-workers for doctors they like and trust. Your OB can also help you choose the best doctor for your baby. It is best to decide on your baby's doctor before you deliver.
- You can visit the office and meet the doctor before deciding. Call and ask the office for a tour and ask questions such as:
 - What are your hours?
 - What should I do if my baby has an emergency?
 - Who will take care of my baby when the doctor is off or out of town?
 - What hospital or emergency room (ER) does the doctor use?
 - What kind of support do you have if I want to breastfeed?
- If you need help finding a doctor for your baby, please call Member Services at (800) 578-0603. We can give you a list of doctors that are accepting new patients and help you choose one.

Safe travel tips and car seats

- When your baby is ready to be discharged from the hospital, you'll need a car seat.
- Always read the instructions for the car seat. Learn how to properly install the seat in the car and how to secure your baby in the seat. You must install the car seat before you can take your baby home.
- If you are unsure how to install the car seat, call your local police, fire station or health department. They will check the car seat for free.
- Always place car seats in the back seat.
- Infants should face the rear of the car until they are about two years old.
- Ask about the car seat rules on public transportation.
- If you borrow or buy a used car seat:
 - Check with the manufacturer for any safety recalls.
 - Make sure it has never been in an accident.
 - Do not use the seat if it's expired.
- When it's cold outside, strap your baby into their car seat first. Then, cover them with a blanket. This will make sure the straps fit properly on the baby. It's not safe to use a blanket or bulky coat in between the baby and straps.
- Pay attention to the weight and size guidelines for the car seat so you know when it's time to get a different one to keep your baby safe.





Safe sleep

SIDS/SUID is when infants die during sleep and is the leading cause of death for infants between the ages of one month and one year. Many deaths happen because of unsafe sleeping environments.

Examples of sleeping environments

Safe sleep — ALWAYS do this!	Unsafe sleep — NEVER do this!
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When it’s time to sleep, lay your baby on their back.• Sleep-related infant death is when infants die unexpectedly during sleep. 3,500 infants die of sleep related death each year in the United States. An unsafe sleep environment contributes to many of these deaths. It is important to follow safe sleep guidelines for your little one.• When it’s time to sleep, put your baby in their own area of your room such as a:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Safety-approved crib– Bassinet or freestanding bedside sleeper– Pack ‘n’ Play• Use a safe sleep area that is firm, flat, and not inclined such as a safety-approved mattress with a fitted sheet.• When it’s time to sleep, dress your baby in light clothing such as a sleeper or something that’s not too hot or too cold.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don’t put your baby to sleep on their belly or side.• Don’t use bumper pads or put blankets, pillows, toys or stuffed animals in your baby’s sleep area.• Don’t put your baby to sleep with blankets or a hat on them• Don’t use an outdated or unapproved crib.• Don’t sleep with your baby (co-sleeping or bed-sharing), or let anyone else (infant, child, adult, or pet, etc.) sleep with your baby.• Don’t let your baby sleep on an adult bed, a sofa or chair, a pillow, any other soft surface, in a bouncy seat, carrier or in a swing. Babies can suffocate in these places. If your baby falls asleep in one, move them to a safe sleep area.• Don’t smoke, vape or use other nicotine products during pregnancy or allow anyone to smoke or vape around your baby.• Once your baby can roll, do not continue to swaddle them for sleep time.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is recommended, but it's not always right for everyone. It's not safe to breastfeed with certain medical conditions. Talk to your OB to see if breastfeeding is right for you.

Benefits of breastfeeding for you

- Brings you closer to your baby
- Is more convenient because it's always ready, the right temperature and the right amount
- Costs less money out of pocket
- Your baby's diapers are less smelly
- Helps you lose pregnancy weight faster
- Helps your uterus go back to its normal size faster

Benefits of breastfeeding for your baby

Breast milk is the perfect food because it:

- Is made by you, for your baby
- Is easier for your baby to digest
- Has antibodies to help your baby's immune system fight infections
- Lowers your baby's chance of sleep related infant death
- Lowers your baby's chance of getting ear infections, colds, allergies and asthma
- Lowers your baby's chance of having stomach problems like gas and colic problems that can cause crying
- Lowers your baby's chance of being overweight as a teen and adult
- Lowers your baby's chance of having diabetes as a teen and adult



Bottle feeding

If you choose not to or cannot breastfeed due to a medical issue, baby formula is a great choice. Formula is made from cow milk and/or soy. If you sign up for the WIC program, they will help you get formula.

Changing formulas can be stressful to a baby's system. They may be fussy, have more gas or constipation. If you need to change your baby's formula, talk to your baby's doctor.



Back at home

Let your body heal

Your body has been through a lot, and it will take time to heal.



There are things you can do to help your body heal:

- Get plenty of rest and try to sleep when your baby sleeps.
- Keep taking your prenatal vitamins and any prescribed medicines.
- Keep eating a variety of healthy foods and drink plenty of fluids.
- Don't lift anything heavier than your baby until your OB tells you it's ok.
- Ask family and friends to help with household chores and meals. This will allow you more time to rest and bond with your baby.
- Keep using ice packs, peri bottles, numbing spray, sitz baths and witch hazel pads for comfort.
- If you had a C-section, check your incision daily for redness, bleeding or drainage.
- If you cannot see your incision, look in a mirror or have a family member look at it.
- Don't have sex until your OB tells you it's okay. You can discuss this with your doctor at your postpartum visit 6 weeks after your delivery.
- Your period might start around 6 to 8 weeks after delivery. If you're breastfeeding, you might not have a period. Even if you don't have a period, you can still get pregnant. It's important to use birth control.
- As your body adjusts to hormone changes, you might have mood swings, night sweats, skin changes or hair loss or texture changes. These things often go away within a few weeks. Talk to your OB if you have concerns.



Baby blues or postpartum depression?

There is a difference between baby blues and postpartum depression. Many women have some form of baby blues which go away in a few days or a week. These symptoms are mild and do not need treatment. If these feelings last longer than two weeks, you might need treatment.

Baby blues:	Postpartum depression:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sadness• Mood swings• Tearfulness or crying spells• Decreased appetite• Difficulty sleeping• Feeling nervous for no clear reason• Feeling scared for your newborn or yourself for no clear reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constant sadness, hopelessness or feeling overwhelmed• Crying all the time• No energy or feeling tired all the time• No appetite• No interest in spending time with friends or family or doing things you used to enjoy• No interest in taking care of yourself or your baby• Feeling like things will never be the same• Feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or guilty for how you feel• Feeling worthless or like you are a “bad” mother• Not being able to go to sleep or waking up so much that you don’t feel rested

Things you can do

- Let your OB know how you’re feeling. Your OB can help you get back to feeling like yourself again
- It is a normal part of care for both your OB and your baby’s doctor to ask you questions about your mood. Answer honestly and talk with them about a plan if you need support.
- Get plenty of rest
- Keep eating a rainbow of colors at every meal
- Keep taking your prenatal vitamins
- Talk to your partner, family or friends
- Join a support group with other new moms
- Ask for help with household chores
- Ask people you trust to watch your baby so you can have some time for yourself

Perinatal depression and/or anxiety can start before or anytime after delivery. Symptoms are more serious and can last from a few weeks to several months. Call your OB right away if you or your loved ones see any signs of postpartum depression. If you have thoughts of hurting yourself, your baby or anyone else, please call 911.



All babies cry.
It's the only way they
can communicate.

What are the most common reasons babies cry?

- Hunger (this is the first thing you should think of when your baby cries)
- Stomach problems from colic or gas
- Need to be burped
- Dirty or wet diaper
- Need to sleep
- Need to be held or cuddled
- Too hot or cold
- Something is hurting or bothering them (this could be a clothes tag or buttons irritating their skin)

If you've checked these things and your baby is still crying, you can put them in a safe sleep area on their back in a crib. Walk away to take a few minutes to calm yourself down. Check on the baby every 10 to 15 minutes until you are both calm.

Never shake, throw, or hit a baby. Shaking, throwing, or hitting a baby can cause permanent injury to their body and brain or death.





Your postpartum visit

It is very important for you to see your OB after delivery because your body is still recovering from childbirth. Your OB may want to see you in as little as 3 days after your delivery if you have certain health conditions or 2 weeks if you had a C-section. All new moms should try to see their OB within 3 weeks of delivery and your OB may want you to come back one or more times before your baby is 12 weeks old.

If you have any of these warning signs before your appointment, call your OB right away:

- Burning or pain when you urinate
- Vomiting or diarrhea that does not stop
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- Having chills, a rash or fever
- Blurred vision, seeing spots or other vision changes
- Sudden swelling in your face or hands
- A headache that does not go away
- A sudden increase in swelling in your feet or legs

What happens at a postpartum visit?

Your OB checks to make sure you're healing from delivery. Your OB will discuss birth control options with you. Wait at least 18 months before you get pregnant again. If you had complications during your pregnancy or if you lost your baby, it's even more important to go to your postpartum visit.

Choose a PCP

It's important to make an appointment with a PCP. Your PCP will take care of most of your care and make referrals when you need them. Think of your PCP as your "medical home" — the place that knows you the best!

If you have any medical needs about eight weeks after your delivery, your OB should tell you to call your PCP. If you need help finding a PCP, call Member Services at (800) 578-0603 (TTY: 711). If you haven't had a dental or vision exam during your pregnancy, now is the time to make an appointment to get them done.

Why are immunizations so important?

Immunizations are shots that help the body fight disease. Each shot fights a different disease, like chickenpox, measles or mumps. Kids need shots to keep them safe from disease and to get ready for school. Talk to your doctor about which shots your kids need. **Remember, these shots are covered at no cost to you.**

Here's a look at the current shot scheduled recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that your newborn will need over the next few years. If you have older children, talk to their doctor about the vaccinations they will need starting at age 9.

Shots your kids need:	When they need them:
Hepatitis B (HepB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: Birth • 2nd dose: 1 to 2 months • 3rd dose: 6 to 18 months
Rotavirus (RV): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RV1 (two doses) • RV5 (three doses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 2 months • 2nd dose: 4 months • 3rd dose: 6 months
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellular Pertussis (Dtap)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 2 months • 2nd dose: 4 months • 3rd dose: 6 months • 4th dose: 15 to 18 months • 5th dose: 4 to 6 years
Haemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib) (three or four doses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 2 months • 2nd dose: 4 months • 3rd dose: 6 months • 4th dose: 12 to 15 months
Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 2 months • 2nd dose: 4 months • 3rd dose: 6 month • 4th dose: 12 to 15 months
Inactivated Poliovirus (IPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 2 months • 2nd dose: 4 months • 3rd dose: 6 to 18 months • 4th dose: 4 to 6 years
Influenza (IIV) or Influenza (LAIV)	Yearly shot (1 or 2 doses): 6 months to 18 years
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	All children under 8 months. Talk to your baby's doctor if they are between the ages of 8-19 months and have not been vaccinated before.
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 12 to 15 months • 2nd dose: 4 to 6 years
Varicella (VAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st dose: 12 to 15 months • 2nd dose: 4 to 6 years
Hepatitis A (HepA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two doses: 12 to 23 months



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