



Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby

A Care Guide for Pregnant Women

Acknowledgements

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Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby...

Taking care of your health is very important. Creating a new human being is a big job. It's a common feeling during pregnancy to feel "out of control" as your body and moods change. The more you know about what's happening and what your options are, the more in control you can feel.

This book can help. Share it with your partner and other important people. Check the Glossary in the back for words you may not know. Write down questions you have in the back of the book. Take it with you on each prenatal visit.

During your visits to the clinic, you'll see many health care providers. These providers work as a health care team to help you be healthy and have a healthy baby. The doctor or nurse-midwife, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or nurse will check to see that your pregnancy is going well. The nutritionist will help you choose the foods you and your baby need for good health. You may also see a social worker, health educator and laboratory worker. If you develop a problem, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, having prenatal care may help keep it from having serious effects.

Prenatal care includes:

- ① Ongoing medical care
- ① Check-ups of your blood pressure and weight gain
- ① Checks of the baby's growth and heartbeat
- ① Lab tests of blood and urine; also other needed tests, like ultrasound
- ① Nutrition counseling
- ① Education about pregnancy, labor and delivery; also about baby care, breastfeeding, parenting and family planning
- ① Answers to your questions
- ① Information about other services offered, like Maternity Care Coordination, home visiting and counseling for emotional health



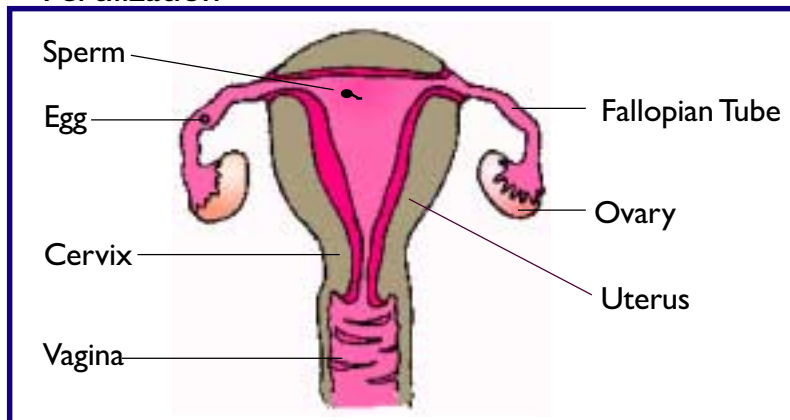
To make your prenatal care work best:

- Keep your appointments.
- Attend prenatal classes at your clinic or hospital.
- Write down your questions when you think of them so you can ask your health care team.
- Tell the health team anything you think is important for your and your baby's health.
- **Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs. If you use any medicines, let your health care team know (see page 27).**
- Know the danger signals in pregnancy (see page 32). Tell your health care team at once if you notice any of them.
- Follow the advice of the people on your health care team: your doctor, nurse-midwife, nurse-practitioner, physician assistant, nurse, nutritionist, social worker, health educator, and other health care providers. Let them know how they can help you.

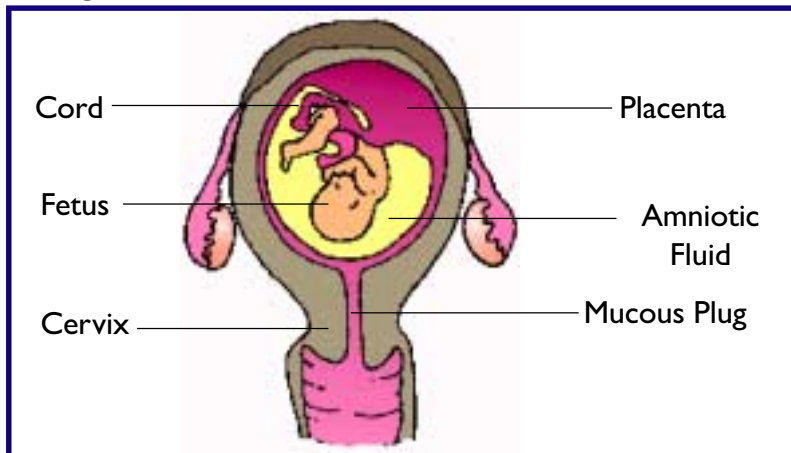
Getting Pregnant

Once a month, most women release an egg from one of their ovaries. This usually happens about 14 days before the next monthly period. This is when you are most likely to get pregnant. Pregnancy occurs when the man's sperm joins with your egg and attaches to the lining of the uterus. The new baby is now forming. Once you are pregnant, your ovary stops releasing eggs. This stops your monthly period. One of the earliest signs of pregnancy is a missed period. Changes occur in your body that allow the baby to develop and grow.

Fertilization



Pregnant Uterus



Growing During Pregnancy

First Trimester (0 to 14 weeks)

Baby

- ▼ Heartbeat can be heard with a Doppler machine at 8 to 12 weeks.
- ▼ Face, arms, legs, fingers, and toes are formed.
- ▼ Brain, digestive and nervous systems are formed.
- ▼ Placenta sends blood and nutrients to the baby through the cord.
- ▼ Amniotic sac and fluid develop.



Mom

- ▼ Periods stop.
- ▼ Nausea and vomiting may occur; usually eases by 17th week.
- ▼ Need to urinate (pee) increases.
- ▼ Breasts become larger and may be tender; clear, sticky colostrum (first milk) may leak from nipples. Nipples enlarge, darken and may have raised bumps.
- ▼ Uterus (womb) may be felt above the pubic bone by 12th week.

Second Trimester (14 to 28 weeks)

Baby

- ▼ Growth is rapid.
- ▼ Sex organs develop.
- ▼ Eyebrows and fingernails form.
- ▼ Skin is thin and wrinkled.
- ▼ Hair covers head.
- ▼ Body is covered with a fine, soft hair and cheesy covering.
- ▼ Hands open and close.
- ▼ Baby sucks and swallows.
- ▼ Heartbeat can be heard about 20 weeks with a fetoscope.



Mom (Second Trimester Continued)

- ▼ You can feel baby's movement at about 16 to 20 weeks.
- ▼ Skin changes may occur:
 - Stretch marks on the breasts or abdomen
 - A dark line from navel down middle of the abdomen
 - Brown spots or blotches on the face
- ▼ Top of uterus is near the ribs by 28th week.

Third Trimester (28 to 40 weeks)

Baby

- ▼ Baby moves, kicks and stretches often.
- ▼ Body begins to fill out; becomes less thin and wrinkled.
- ▼ Fine body hair disappears.
- ▼ First babies usually “drop” into pelvis before labor begins (36-40 weeks). Second or later babies may not settle deep into pelvis until labor begins.



Mom

- ▼ You feel baby's movements more strongly.
- ▼ Uterus may get hard and tight at times. This is a contraction. This may or may not be labor.
- ▼ You may feel short of breath until the baby “drops,” then may feel an increased need to urinate.
- ▼ Cervix may begin to efface, or thin out, in last weeks of pregnancy.
- ▼ Cervix may begin to dilate, or open slightly, in last weeks of pregnancy.

Nutrition and Pregnancy

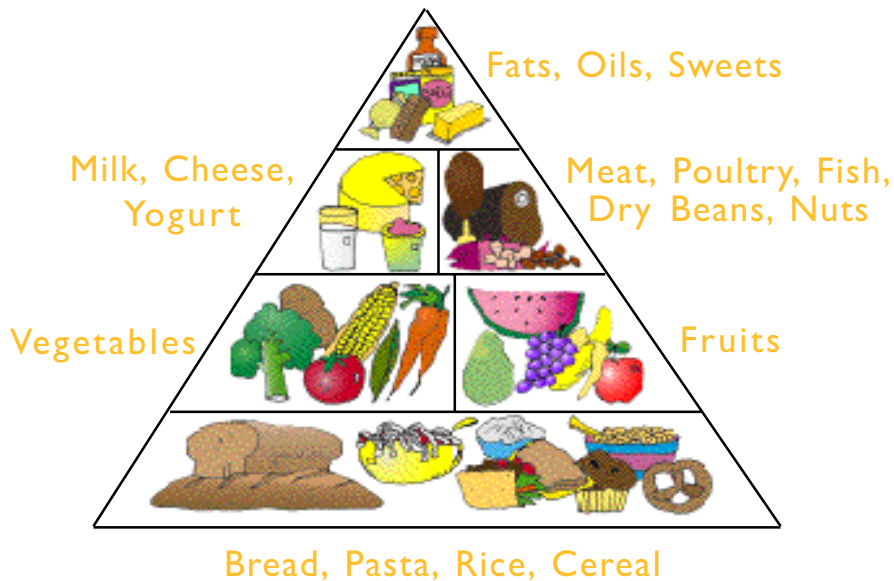
What you eat during pregnancy can affect your baby's health. The nutrients, or building blocks, in your food pass from you to him or her through the placenta. Eating foods that supply these needed body-building blocks will give your baby a good chance to be born healthy. Eating well will help keep you healthy, too.

Your nutritionist, nurse or doctor will talk with you about what foods will provide the nutrients you and your baby need. If money for healthful food is a problem, there are programs that can help. One is the WIC Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. Through the WIC Program you can learn more about foods for a healthy pregnancy. You can even get certain foods to help meet your needs. Your health care team can give you information about other community resources (*see page 69*).

Sometimes the nutritionists will ask what you have been eating. They can help you make changes in your food choices for better health. Let them know how they can help you.

Plan for Eating Well

The Food Pyramid gives a plan for eating well. Using the Food Pyramid plan will help you get the energy and nutrients you need to be healthy and to have a healthy baby.



No one group is more important than another. You need them all. Make variety a habit. Try a new food each week. Cook with herbs and spices for flavor adventures.

A look at serving sizes

Bread, Pasta, Rice, Cereal

Whole grain choices are high in fiber.

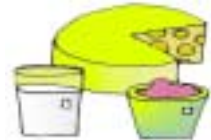
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, pasta
- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- 1 slice bread, tortilla, roll, pancake



Milk, Yogurt, Cheese

Lowfat choices are good for most people.

- 1 cup (8 ounces) milk or yogurt
- 1 to 1-1/2 ounces cheese



Vegetables and Fruits

Fresh fruits and vegetables are high in fiber.

Choose a wide variety every day.

- 1/2 cup cooked or chopped raw vegetable or fruit
- 1 cup leafy vegetables
- 1 medium fruit
- 3/4 cup (6 ounces) of fruit or vegetable juice



Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry beans, Nuts

Lean choices are lower in fat.

- 2 to 3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish
- (1/2 cup of cooked dry beans, 1 egg, or
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter count as
- 1 ounce of meat)



Fat, Oils, Sweets

Choose small amounts of these.

About breads and cereals

The most healthful diets are built around grain products, the base of the Food Pyramid. Breads, biscuits, muffins and rolls are some examples. So are spaghetti, macaroni and other pastas, rice and tortillas. Foods like cereal, grits, oatmeal and pancakes also belong in this group. If you eat one or two servings for each meal and snack, you'll be able to get the 9 to 11 servings you need each day.

About vegetables

Some women think it is hard to get 4 to 5 servings of vegetables a day. But, a meal with potatoes, green beans and salad has 3 servings! Add tomato wedges at lunch and some carrot sticks with a snack, and you have all the vegetables you need. To get a variety of vegetables, try a new one or two each week. Fresh, frozen or canned - experiment and enjoy!

**Some vegetables are very good sources of vitamin A.
Choose one of these 3 or more times a week:**

- Dark green leafy vegetables - collards, turnip greens, mustard greens, spinach, broccoli.
- Deep yellow or orange vegetables - carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, winter squash.

**A few vegetables are very good sources of vitamin C.
Have a vitamin C-rich food every day, such as:**

- Broccoli, bell peppers, cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes.

About fruits

Eat one serving of fruit with each meal and one with a snack to get the 3 to 4 servings you need each day. Again, try to get some variety. There are many fresh, canned and frozen fruits to choose from. And remember, juices count, too!

Some fruits are very good sources of vitamin C:

- Oranges, tangerines, lemons, grapefruit, strawberries, cantaloupe, watermelon.

Some fruits are a good source of vitamin A:

- Apricots, cantaloupe, peaches.

About milk

It is hard to get all the nutrients you need without using milk in some form. If you don't drink plain milk, there are other ways to get the 3 servings you need each day. Try some of these:

- ◆ Flavored milk
- ◆ Milkshakes
- ◆ Cheese (plain or in other foods like pizza, cheese toast or macaroni and cheese)
- ◆ Yogurt
- ◆ Cottage cheese
- ◆ Ice milk or ice cream
- ◆ Pudding
- ◆ Custard



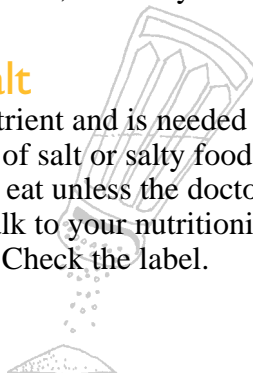
If milk gives you nausea or gives you gas, try drinking a smaller amount at a time, or have it with other foods. If you still have problems, talk to your nutritionist about ideas for other foods to use to replace the milk.

About meat

Many people eat more meat than they need. You can be healthy without eating meat every day. Cooked dried beans or peas, like pintos or blackeye peas, are a great choice instead! When you do eat meat, you don't need large servings. Six ounces of meat or other foods in the group is plenty for the day. A two-ounce serving is equal to a small pork chop, a chicken thigh, or a regular hamburger at a fast-food restaurant. The lean part of the meat is what counts. Fat meats such as bacon, sausage or fatback do not have much protein, so they don't count as a serving from the meat group. If you are a vegetarian or avoid eating meat, discuss your needs with your nutritionist or nurse.

Taking a look at salt

Salt is an important nutrient and is needed during pregnancy. If you eat moderate amounts of salt or salty foods, there is no need to change how much salt you eat unless the doctor says to. If you eat a lot of salt or salty foods, talk to your nutritionist or nurse. Buy iodized salt for use at home. Check the label.



Getting enough fluid

You need more fluids when you are pregnant. Drink 8 to 12 glasses of water or other liquid like milk or juice each day. Try to avoid liquids with a lot of caffeine - coffee, tea and some soft drinks. It's a good idea to limit these to 1 or 2 servings a day - or none at all. Caffeine tends to take water out of the body. Liquids with a lot of sugar, like soft drinks, sweet tea and fruit punches, can add too many extra calories for some women. Water is a good choice for fluid.

Food cravings






Many women do have cravings while pregnant. If you are getting the foods you need, eating a food you crave is fine. Just watch the amounts and don't overdo.

On the other hand, some women have a craving for non-food items when they are pregnant. They crave items like dirt, clay, chimney soot, laundry starch, plaster, coffee grounds, and other non-food items. Eating these can fill you up, so you are not hungry for food. Large amounts of these can also block the intestine and cause constipation and other serious problems. Talk to your health care provider if you crave non-food items.

Even food items some women crave, like cornstarch or raw flour, may not be good for you in large amounts. Like the non-foods, they can cause problems. If you have a strong urge to eat any of these items, talk to your nutritionist, nurse, or doctor.

For many women, cravings happen when their blood iron is low. Taking your prenatal vitamins or prescribed iron tablet every day may help prevent or reduce cravings.

How Foods Help You and Your Baby

Food Group	Building Blocks
<p>Breads and Cereals 9-11 Servings</p> 	<p>B Vitamins Iron</p>
<p>Vegetables 4-5 Servings</p> 	<p>Vitamin A Vitamin C Folic Acid Iron</p>
<p>Fruits 3-4 Servings</p> 	<p>Protein Calcium Vitamins</p>
<p>Milk and Milk Products 3 Servings</p> 	<p>Protein Iron Vitamins</p>
<p>Meat and Meat Substitutes 3 Servings</p> 	<p>Essential Fatty Acids</p>
<p>Fats and Oils</p>	<p>Essential Fatty Acids</p>

The nutrients, or building blocks, in foods help both you and your baby in much the same ways. The pictures of the baby show what parts of the body - yours and your baby's - are helped by different foods and their nutrients.

Builds

Growth



Eyes
Skin
Blood



Bones
Teeth
Eyes



Brain
Blood
Muscle



Brain cells

Energy

Weight Gain

Pregnancy is a time of growth. As the baby grows, your body changes and you gain weight. The amount you can expect to gain depends on your weight before pregnancy.

If before pregnancy you were...	You should gain:
Average weight	25-35 pounds
Underweight	28-40 pounds
Overweight	15-25 pounds

Note: Women of color and young teens tend to have healthier babies when they gain at the higher end of the ranges.

Each time you visit the clinic you'll be weighed. Your weight will be marked on a graph. This picture of your weight gain shows your health care team how your gain is going. The pattern of weight gain is as important as the total amount you gain.

You may wonder why you need to gain weight during pregnancy. The baby will not weigh 30 pounds! Here's where the weight goes:

	Pounds
Baby	7 1/2 to 8 1/2
Placenta	1 1/2
Amniotic fluid (bag of waters)	2
Uterus	2 to 3
Breasts	1
Blood	3
Fluid	5 to 6
Mother's extra tissues	3 to 10
Total	25 to 35

These are average figures. The amount you gain may be different.

While it is important to gain enough weight, you'll want to avoid gaining too much. Gaining too much weight may make delivery harder. It may also make it harder to get back to the weight you were before you became pregnant.

Also try to avoid losing weight during your pregnancy. If you have a lot of nausea or vomiting, work hard to keep down as much fluid and food as you can. Talk to your nutritionist, nurse or doctor. They will suggest ways to get the food you need to prevent weight loss.

Personal Care

During your pregnancy, your body will change in many ways. Although you will have much in common with other pregnant women, each pregnancy is unique. And, there's no one "right" way to be pregnant. So watch for the changes, but know that your pregnancy may not be just like the book describes. Some of the common body changes may call for special personal care.

Bathing

Hormone changes often increase sweating. You may want to bathe or shower more often. Warm tub baths are safe during pregnancy unless your bag of water has broken or is leaking. Many women are more clumsy in late pregnancy. Take special care getting in or out of the tub.

Breasts

It is normal for your breasts to leak a clear, sticky liquid during pregnancy. This is colostrum. It is the first milk your breasts make for breastfeeding your baby. When bathing or showering, use little or no soap directly on your nipples. Just rinse them well and pat dry with a soft towel.

Vaginal discharge

You may notice more discharge from the vagina. Use only soap and water when bathing the vaginal area. While pregnant, and at other times as well, avoid douches and sprays. They may cause infections or irritation of the vagina. Wipe from front to back to avoid passing germs from the rectum to the vagina. These can also cause infections. Cotton panties and loose clothing decrease the chance of getting an infection.

If you do notice a vaginal discharge with a bad odor or yellow color, itching or irritation, tell your doctor or nurse. If you have an infection, you may need a medicine.

Rest and relaxation

During the early and late months of your pregnancy, you may find you need more rest and sleep. Listen to your body. Feeling tired, grouchy or draggy may be signs that you need extra rest. Take a nap during the day, or go to bed earlier at night. Even resting with your feet propped up may help. Being overtired puts extra work on your body.



Dealing With Discomforts

As your baby grows and your body changes, you may have some discomforts. Some may be caused by changes in hormones. Others may be caused by the growing baby. Some women are bothered by them only at certain times. Some women have no discomforts at all.

Here are some common discomforts and tips to try to help yourself feel better. If you do not get relief, talk to your health care provider. Some minor discomforts, if neglected, can lead to bigger problems.

Discomforts	Tips to Feel Better
<p>Breast Tenderness Usually occurs in early pregnancy, but may last throughout. May be caused by hormones, increased tissue and fluids. Breasts are getting ready for breastfeeding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Wear a well-fitted bra for support.
<p>Headaches May occur any time in pregnancy, but are more common in first trimester. More likely to happen in evening. May be due to hormone changes, tension or stress, or skipping meals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Be sure to eat regularly - every 2 to 4 hours.● Both exercise and relaxing can help relieve tension. See which works best for you.● Talk to someone about things that worry or upset you.● Constant headaches, especially if you are also dizzy and have spots before your eyes or blurred vision, may be signs of serious problems. Let your doctor or nurse know at once if you have any of these problems.● Talk to your health care team before you take any medicine for headaches.
<p>Bleeding Gums May occur in early pregnancy due to hormonal changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Brush and floss teeth daily.● Use a soft toothbrush.● Gums that bleed easily may be a sign of gum disease or other problems. See your dentist. Be sure to tell him or her that you are pregnant. If you need X-rays, the staff will protect your baby with a special cover.

Dealing With Discomforts

Discomforts

Tips to Feel Better

Nausea and Vomiting (morning sickness)

Is common in early pregnancy. Usually improves by the 17th week of pregnancy. May occur at any time of day. May be caused by hormone changes.

- Avoid strong smells. Open windows and use a fan while cooking. Ask someone else to cook.
- Eat dry toast, several salted crackers or dry cereal 30 minutes before getting out of bed.
- Eat any food that appeals to you until the nausea improves. Salty foods like crackers, pretzels, or potato chips help many women.
- Eat small amounts often. Avoid going more than 2 hours between eating during the day. 5 to 6 small meals a day may work better than 3 big ones.
- Eat a snack with protein before bed. Try a sandwich, peanut butter and crackers, or a bowl of cereal with milk.
- Avoid foods that make you feel nauseated. Greasy, fried, and spicy foods bother many women.
- Drink liquids between meals instead of with meals.
- Try a tart drink like lemonade. Many women find it settles their stomach.
- Avoid sudden movements. If at all possible, rest until the nausea passes.
- **Constant or severe vomiting or nausea can be a serious problem. Call your health care team at once.**

Shortness of Breath

May occur early in pregnancy or in the later months as the baby gets bigger.

- Rest when you need to. Do not let yourself become too tired.
- Avoid smoking.
- Prop yourself up on an extra pillow when lying down, or lie on your side.

Dealing With Discomforts

Discomforts

Tips to Feel Better

<p>Frequent Urination (need to pee more often) Occurs early or late in pregnancy. Is caused by the uterus pressing against the bladder.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Practice the Kegels exercise (<i>see page 23</i>).● Avoid tea, coffee and soft drinks that contain caffeine, BUT DRINK PLENTY OF OTHER FLUIDS.● Urinate when you feel the urge.● If your panties are always wet or damp with a colorless or odorless fluid, the amniotic sac may be leaking. Pain, burning, or bleeding when urinating may be signs of a bladder infection. Tell your health team at once if you have any of these problems.
<p>Indigestion (heartburn) May occur at any time during pregnancy. May be caused by hormone changes or by pressure of the growing baby on the stomach. May improve late in pregnancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Eat 5 or 6 small meals a day instead of 3 large ones.● Drink liquids between meals instead of with meals.● Avoid fatty, fried and spicy foods.● Wait at least 30 minutes after eating to lie down or bend over.● Talk to your health care team before using medicines for heartburn.
<p>Hemorrhoids (piles) May occur in the latter part of pregnancy or after birth. May be caused by poor circulation in veins in the rectum. Constipation may also cause hemorrhoids.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Avoid constipation (<i>see page 22</i>).● Soak in warm bath.● Get regular exercise.● If hemorrhoids bleed, become painful or swollen, or occur with diarrhea, tell your health care team.

Dealing With Discomforts

Discomforts	Tips to Feel Better
<p>Braxton-Hicks Contractions (false labor) These contractions are a mild tightening or “balling up” of the uterus. They are a way of helping blood circulate. May also occur after sexual activity. Usually disappear after an hour of rest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Rest and relax.● Sometimes walking around will relieve the contractions.● Any contractions which come every 10 minutes or more often (6 or more contractions in 1 hour) may be a sign of true labor. Let your health care team know right away if you are having these (see page 40).● Contractions before your due date might be a sign of preterm (premature) labor. Let your health care team know right away.
<p>Leg Cramps May be caused by poor blood circulation, being tired or a lack of exercise. A lack of milk or dairy products may also be a cause.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Get some exercise, such as walking, 20 to 30 minutes a day.● Rest with your legs propped up on a stool.● Wear support hose.● Have at least 3 servings of dairy products every day.● To ease leg cramps:<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Press your foot against the footboard of your bed while you straighten your leg.OR› Have someone gently push your foot and toes towards your head while gently pushing down on your knee.OR› Stand up and straighten your leg.● Tell your health care providers if these tips do not bring relief.

Dealing With Discomforts

Discomforts

Tips to Feel Better

Constipation

May occur at any time during pregnancy. May be caused by hormone changes, a lack of fiber in the diet or a lack of exercise. As the uterus gets bigger and presses against your bowel, constipation can result.

- Have a regular schedule of rest, meals and activity. This promotes regular bowel movements.
- Get some exercise every day. Walking for 20 to 30 minutes is good exercise.
- Drink 8 to 12 glasses of fluids each day. Water, juices and warm liquids may help.
- Eat foods with fiber and bulk every day. Whole grain breads and cereals, vegetables, salads and raw fruit are good choices.
- Do not hold back when you feel the urge to have a bowel movement.
- **If you still need help, talk with your health care team. Get their OK before you use laxatives, enemas or other remedies.**

Backache

May worsen late in pregnancy when the uterus is getting larger. May be a sign that you need to rest.

- Use good posture, especially when bending or kneeling.
- Wear flat or low-heeled shoes.
- Avoid lifting more than 25 pounds.
- Use a firm mattress on the bed.
- Get more rest.
- Massage back muscles, or use warm, moist heat on your back.
- Do the pelvic rock exercise (*see page 23*).
- **Backache that comes all the way around to your stomach may be a sign of labor. Backache can also be a sign of bladder infection. Tell your health care team about any backache.**

Exercise in Pregnancy

Exercise can make you feel better and make your muscles stronger. It can also improve posture and reduce backache. If you are exercising on your own, check with your health care team. **Stop an exercise if it hurts !**

Walk for Exercise

Work up to at least 20 to 30 minutes a day. Remember that your balance changes when you are pregnant. Wear low heels and shoes with support. Be careful. Practice good posture, especially when exercising. Stoop down instead of bending over from the back. Tuck the buttocks in. Letting the abdomen stick out in front is hard on your back.

Pelvic Rock Exercise

This exercise will help reduce backache. Stand with your back to the wall. Your feet should be slightly apart, with your heels about 6 inches from the wall.

- › Push the small of your back flat against the wall. As you do this, your pelvis will rock forward. Your lower back should remain touching the wall.
- › Hold for a count of 5, and then release.
- › Do 10 exercises at least twice a day.



Kegels “Pelvic Floor” Exercise.

This exercise helps improve muscle tone around the opening to the bladder, birth canal and bowel.

When first learning the exercise:

- › Sit on the toilet with legs spread apart.
- › Pass some urine (pee), then try to stop the flow of urine. Notice the muscles you must squeeze to make the urine stop.
- › Once you know which muscles to squeeze, do the exercise when not passing urine. You can do it while standing, walking, sitting or lying down.
- › Do 10 to 15 exercises at least 3 or 4 times a day.

Your health care provider may recommend other exercises for you.

Emotional Changes

Even during the happiest pregnancies, mothers and fathers have worries. Here are some common fears:

- ❧ What if something happens to me?
- ❧ What if something happens to the baby?
- ❧ How will we cope with labor?
- ❧ Will I be a good mother or father?
- ❧ How will we handle all the bills?
- ❧ Are the changes I'm having in my body, feelings and moods normal ones?
- ❧ I've been having silly dreams and nightmares. Is this normal?



Talk openly with someone you trust about your fears. A friend, family member or someone at the clinic can be helpful. Learn about pregnancy by reading books and going to prenatal classes. The more you know, the better you'll feel. Try to enjoy the special time of your pregnancy.

Having Sex During Pregnancy

Your desire to have sex while you are pregnant may stay the same. Or, it could increase or decrease. Many women feel less desire for sex near the end of the pregnancy. The man sometimes worries about hurting the baby or the mother. Having sex during pregnancy is usually OK. If sex is uncomfortable, try another position. When the woman is on top, she can decide how far the penis goes in. She can make it more comfortable.

There are times when you should not have sex during pregnancy. Remember, you can also share your love by touching and hugging... and talk about your feelings.



Avoid sex when any of the following happens:

- ☞ You have bleeding from the vagina.
- ☞ Your bag of water breaks or is leaking.
- ☞ You have pain.
- ☞ Your health care provider told you not to have sex because of a problem.

Never allow your partner to blow air into the vagina. This is very dangerous.

Risks During Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a very special time to take care of yourself and your baby. It's a good time to make some changes to enhance your health as you get ready to parent a new child. If you avoid as many risks as you can, your baby is likely to be born healthier.

Alcohol

While you are pregnant, do not drink wine, wine coolers, beer or liquor. The alcohol goes right to your baby and hurts the brain cells. Alcohol stays in your baby's body for hours. Some babies born to mothers who drink alcohol have birth defects. No one knows how much alcohol causes the defects. Protect your baby by not drinking any alcohol. If you drink regularly, talk to your health care team.

Tobacco

Smoking may cause cancer, heart and lung disease. Quitting now can help protect you from these diseases. When you smoke, unsafe chemicals get into your blood - and into your baby. This can happen when you are with people who are smoking, even if you do not smoke yourself. The gases and chemicals stay in your system for hours. They affect the amount of food and oxygen that can reach your growing baby. Babies of mothers who smoke tend to be too small to be healthy. They are also at risk of being born too early (preterm or premature).

The more you smoke, the higher the risk. If you can't quit, at least cut down. For help, talk to your health care team. Using snuff or chewing tobacco also puts chemicals into your body and your baby's body. Try chewing gum instead of using tobacco.

Drugs and medicines

If you need a medicine while you are pregnant, check with your health care team. They will give you something that is safe for both you and your baby. Even common medicines like aspirin, antacids and cold medicines may cause harm. Some medicines may cause birth defects or be a danger to your baby's health.

Street drugs such as cocaine, speed, "downers," opium and heroin are harmful to you and your baby. Marijuana, LSD and other drugs may also be harmful. The chemicals attack your baby's growing body. After you come down from your high, your baby is still high. The chemicals may stay in your baby's blood for days. If you use street drugs, talk to your health care team. **Don't take any drugs or medicines while you are pregnant unless your health care team knows about it.**

Violence at home

Being pregnant does not protect a woman from an abusive partner. In fact, abuse may increase when a woman becomes pregnant. Research suggests that about 1 in 4 pregnant women are abused. Hitting, pinching, pushing and kicking are examples of abuse. But, abuse is any kind of bad treatment. It also includes screaming and blaming, putting you down, and trying to control you. Sometimes drug or alcohol use is involved. If you are being abused, talk to your health care provider. There are things you can do to protect yourself and your growing baby.

Caffeine

Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, chocolate and many soft drinks. It may cause you to stay awake or give you "the jitters." It may also speed up your heartbeat and breathing. During pregnancy, it's best to limit yourself to a total of 2 cups of drinks with caffeine a day (coffee, tea, cocoa or soft drinks). Drink more water, milk and juice instead.

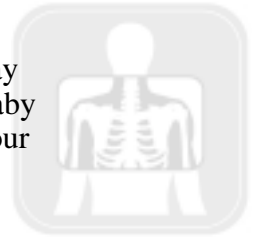


Toxoplasmosis (“Toxo”)

This disease comes from a parasite found in soil and cat feces. It may also be found in raw or rare meat. Toxoplasmosis may not affect adults, but it can be passed to your unborn baby. It may cause brain damage and blindness in the baby. While you are pregnant, it is safest not to work outside in the soil or change cat litter. If you must, be sure to wear gloves. Wash your hands afterwards. Wear gloves, too, if you must work with raw meat. Avoid eating raw or rare meat.

X-rays

If you need to have an X-ray taken, make sure the X-ray staff know that you are pregnant. They will protect your baby with a special cover. Otherwise, the X-rays might affect your baby’s growth, or cause birth defects or serious diseases.



Chemical and work hazards

Chemicals may be harmful to your growing baby. Some cause birth defects, miscarriage and preterm labor. If you work around chemicals, find out which ones are used in or around your job. Talk with your health care team about them. For example, lead, mercury and other chemicals in places that make rubber, plastics and textiles may be harmful. Be careful when using any chemicals at home. Read warnings on cleaning fluids, paints, insect sprays and other home chemicals. If your job calls for long hours of standing, heavy lifting or exposure to heat and cold, talk with your health care providers. Certain working conditions may be too hard on you during pregnancy.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are sometimes called sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or venereal disease (VD). They are passed from person to person during sex. To prevent STDs, use a latex condom (rubber) every time you have sex, even when you are pregnant. Call your doctor or clinic at once if you suspect that you have any symptoms or have been in contact with any of these diseases.



Babies born to women with untreated STDs can have many problems

Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is caused by a germ. Some symptoms may be burning when urinating, soreness, a yellowish vaginal discharge, or pain in the lower abdomen. Sometimes there are no symptoms. Gonorrhea can cause serious problems if not treated. The woman and her partner must be treated. Treatment can cure the disease. A baby born to a mother with gonorrhea may have the disease. He or she may also become blind unless treated. Special eye drops given to babies at birth protect them from this blindness.

Chlamydia

Chlamydia may cause a heavy vaginal discharge or light vaginal bleeding or “spotting.” There may also be burning when urinating. In men, it may cause burning or a discharge from the penis. Sometimes there are no symptoms at all. Medicines can cure chlamydia. Both the woman and the man must be treated. A baby who gets chlamydia during birth may have eye infections or pneumonia. Special eye drops and ointments can protect the eyes.

Syphilis

Syphilis is caused by a germ that may cause a painless sore on the sex organs or mouth in both women and men. Although the sores go away without treatment, the disease stays in the body and spreads to other parts. Blood tests may be done to test for syphilis. Both partners need treatment. A baby born to a mother with syphilis may have brain damage or other problems. He or she may need treatment at birth.

Herpes

The herpes virus causes small blisters or sores. They may come and go, and they are usually painful. The sores can usually be seen on the woman’s genital area, vagina and cervix, or on the man’s penis. Tell your health care provider about any sores you notice around your vagina. If you or your partner has herpes sores, do not have sexual contact. When sores are not present, use a latex condom when having sex. During childbirth the baby may get herpes from the mother. It may cause brain damage or death. Your baby may be born by Cesarean section if you have active herpes.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus. You can get it from sexual contact or contact with blood carrying the virus. Daily contact with people in your household who have the virus can also spread it. Hepatitis B may also be passed by using personal items such as razors and toothbrushes of an infected person. The disease can cause liver damage and death.

Pregnant women should be tested for hepatitis B. If the test shows the disease, they need special treatment and care. Their sexual partners and people in their household should also be tested. Their babies may be treated at birth to protect them from the disease.

HIV/AIDS

HIV, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is the virus that causes AIDS. You can get HIV by having unsafe sex, just as you can get any of the sexually transmitted diseases. You can also get HIV by sharing needles or drug works when shooting drugs. HIV damages the body's defense against disease. This damage leaves the body open to attack by diseases that are usually not a threat to people without HIV. You can have the virus without knowing it, because it does not have any symptoms itself.

In some states, including North Carolina, every pregnant woman must be offered counseling and testing for HIV. Pregnant women should be tested for HIV. If the test shows HIV, pregnant women need special counseling and care. A baby born to a mother with HIV may have the disease. There are some medicines pregnant women with HIV can take that may protect their babies. They should talk to their health care provider about all options. **Because HIV has been found in breastmilk, women who have the virus should not breastfeed their babies.**

Danger Signals During Pregnancy

Certain signals during pregnancy may mean a serious problem. Know the danger signals. If you notice any, call your health care provider right away. Or, go to the hospital emergency room.

- › Chills and fever
- › Bad headache or feeling dizzy
- › Dim or blurred vision, flashing bright lights or spots
- › A lot of swelling of face and body
- › Any signs of preterm labor (*see page 33*)
- › Heavy pain under the ribs which does not go away
- › Sharp pains in abdomen or side which do not go away
- › Bright red vaginal bleeding
- › Leaking from bag of water - slow leak or sudden gush
- › Pain when passing urine

Preterm Labor

Preterm labor is labor that starts before the 37th week of pregnancy. Babies born too early may have problems of many kinds. They may need to stay in the hospital for a long time. The earlier the baby is born, the more problems he or she may have. Preterm labor can happen to any woman, but some things increase the chance. Your health care team will ask you many questions to understand your chance of having preterm labor. If your risk is high for preterm labor, there is a greater chance that you might have a premature baby. If you know what to look for, you will be able to tell if preterm labor is happening to you. Then you can get help early.

Be alert for signs of preterm labor

- Contractions of the uterus - that are less than 10 minutes apart (6 or more contractions in an hour), that may be painless or may feel like the baby is “balling up”
- Cramps like those with your period - that come and go, or that don't go away
- Cramps in the abdomen or stomach - with or without diarrhea
- Increase or change in vaginal discharge - watery or with mucus or blood
- Low, dull backache - that comes and goes, or that doesn't go away
- Pressure - that feels like the baby is pushing down; comes and goes

**You may or may not feel pain
with preterm labor**

If you have any signs of preterm labor:

- **Lie down on your side for one hour. While resting, drink two or three glasses of water or juice. Many times the signs of preterm labor will go away.**
- **If the signs are still present after one hour, call your doctor, clinic or hospital and tell them:**
 - Your name
 - When your baby is due
 - What signs you are having
 - How often you are having contractions, if you are having them



Signs of labor before the 37th week of pregnancy could mean preterm labor. Report the signs early and follow the advice of your health care team. Preterm labor may be stopped if it is caught early.

Counting Baby's Movements

Some babies are very active. Some move very little. Can you tell when your baby is sleeping? Some babies may slow down a little in the last few days before delivery. As they get larger, they have less room to move around in the uterus.

If you notice that your baby is moving a lot more, a lot less or not at all, let your health care providers know at once. They will usually want to listen to the baby's heartbeat. Sometimes, around 32 weeks (8 months) of pregnancy or later, the clinic will ask you to count the baby's movements.

(This counting test will not work early in pregnancy. The baby is very small then, and the movements are hard to feel.)

Here's one example of how to do it:

- ⌚ Decide on a 12-hour period. Example: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- ⌚ Count and record each time you feel the baby move during the 12 hours. When you have counted 10 movements, you can stop counting until the next morning.
- ⌚ Call your doctor or clinic if you count less than 10 movements in a 12-hour period. Go to the emergency room if you can't contact your health care team.

Planning Ahead

Even in the early months of pregnancy you can make plans for when the baby comes.

- ◆ **Who will care for your other children when you go to the hospital?**

Have at least one or two persons who could help. Have phone numbers handy.

- ◆ **What will you need when the baby comes home?**

Start to collect things you'll need for the baby at home:

- ❖ Cloth or disposable diapers to fit a newborn
- ❖ Cotton shirts or gowns
- ❖ Baby blankets
- ❖ Nursing bras and pads for breastfeeding
- ❖ Bottles and formula if not breastfeeding
- ❖ A safe place for the baby to sleep
- ❖ An approved infant safety car seat

- ◆ **Who will go to the hospital with you?
Will someone be able to stay with you during labor and delivery?**

Most hospitals will allow a “support person” to stay with you during labor and delivery. Find out about your hospital’s rules ahead of time. Your support person may be your partner, a friend or relative, or anyone else you choose. He or she needs to know about labor and delivery and what his or her role will be. A hospital tour and prenatal classes will also help you both know what to expect. Knowing what to expect helps you feel more confident about your birth experience. If you don’t have someone to be your support person, the hospital nurse will help you.