

Metro Partners in Women's Health

The Experience You Can Trust, The Attention You Deserve

PRENATAL VISITS

Congratulations on your pregnancy! With every pregnancy there are so many new experiences and so many questions. This handout will go over some basic information about pregnancy and prenatal care and will hopefully answer some of your questions.

Normal pregnancy lasts 40 weeks from your last menstrual period until your due date. Anything from 3 weeks before until 2 weeks after your due date is within the normal range.

Regular prenatal care has been shown to be very important in maintaining healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. At your first prenatal visit we will be asking a lot of questions about your health, family, and previous pregnancy histories. We will also be obtaining several blood tests. This will help determine if you have any problems which could put your pregnancy at risk.

Office visits are every 4 weeks for the first 28 weeks, every 2 weeks until 36 weeks, then every week until you deliver. If the pregnancy extends beyond your due date you are seen twice per week.

At every visit we will check your weight, blood pressure, urine (for sugar and protein), listen to the baby's heartbeat, measure your uterus to check the baby's growth, and discuss any questions or concerns you might have.

It is important you are responsible about coming to your regular visits. If you are not able to come for an appointment, please call in advance and reschedule.

ROUTINE TESTING

1st Visit: Complete blood count, rubella titer, Hepatitis B surface antigen, syphilis serology, blood type and antibody screen, urinalysis and culture, and cervical cultures. (Pap smear, if due)

15-18 Weeks: Quad Screen is offered (Blood test to screen for brain and spinal cord defects and chromosomal abnormalities, like Downs Syndrome). Mid trimester ultrasound will be scheduled.

24-28 Weeks: One hour glucose screen for gestational diabetes.

35-37 Weeks: Cervical Culture for Group B Strep.

TRAVEL

Travel is usually safe during pregnancy. If you go on a long trip, you should walk around every two hours to improve circulation in your legs. Whenever you are in the car, you should wear both a shoulder strap and lap seat belt. The lap restraints should be fastened below your abdomen as low on the hips as possible. We do not recommend that you travel after 36 weeks of pregnancy.

SEX

Sex during a normal pregnancy is generally safe. You may find that your desire for sex increases, decreases, or stays the same. As long as you are not having problems, such as bleeding or preterm labor, and you are comfortable having sex, it is fine to continue doing so.

BREASTFEEDING

We strongly encourage you to breastfeed your newborn. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding your baby for the first full year of life. The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding until your baby is two years old. There are numerous health benefits for babies who are breast fed, including fewer allergies, colds, ear infections, and less risk of juvenile diabetes. There are classes on breastfeeding that you may want to attend before you have your baby. There are Certified Lactation Consultants that will visit you and your baby in the hospital right after birth.

CIRCUMCISION

Circumcision is the surgical removal of the foreskin from the penis. More than 1/2 of all boys in the US are circumcised. There is no medical indication for circumcising a newborn. It is not medically necessary and is usually performed at the request of the parents for social or religious reasons. Circumcision is a surgical procedure and as such carries the usual risks of surgery, including bleeding, infection, and damage to the penis. We use local anesthesia and the procedure takes about five minutes. It is done when the baby is 12-24 hours old and before you take the baby home.

CHOOSING A DOCTOR FOR THE BABY

Ideally, you need to choose a pediatrician or family practitioner to take care of your baby before the baby is born. The baby's doctor will do a complete exam of the baby before he/she goes home and will be the doctor to discharge the baby from the hospital. We can provide you with a list of Family Practitioners and Pediatricians that we recommend.

ALCOHOL, CIGARETTES, AND OTHER DRUGS

We don't know exactly how much alcohol may be safe during pregnancy, therefore we recommend that you do not drink at all during the pregnancy.

Women who smoke cigarettes have a higher rate of miscarriage, premature birth, and low birth weight babies than women who don't smoke. **IF YOU SMOKE-STOP!!!**

Don't take any over the counter medicines, herbs, or supplements without first discussing it with your doctor, unless it is on our list of approved medicines in your packet of information.

Do not take any or use any illegal drugs. Cocaine is especially dangerous in pregnancy-it is associated with stillbirth, miscarriage, hemorrhage, and sudden infant death syndrome. If you are using or have used any illegal drugs during your pregnancy, please let us know so that we can closely monitor your pregnancy for any problems.

DOCTORS AND NURSE-MIDWIVES ON CALL

Metro Partners in Women's Health is a group of five doctors, two midwives, and three contingent midwives. There is always a doctor and midwife on call 24-7. We all take turns being on call for 24 hours at a time. Any one of the five doctors could deliver your baby (or if you are a nurse-midwife patient-any of the five midwives).

If you have questions or problems during office hours, please call our office at 248-662-4388.

After hours, call the **Answering Service . 248-544-6984** (Doctors)
248-691-8656 (Midwives)

FINALLY

Every pregnancy and birth is a unique and individual experience. On behalf of our entire staff, we want to say thank you for choosing Metro Partners and we hope we can work together to make your pregnancy and birth the positive and joyful experience it can and should be. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.