



Your Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy

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Introduction

Considerations for a healthy pregnancy

Congratulations on your pregnancy! Pregnancy can be an exciting and transformative experience, full of anticipation and joy. It can also be a time of challenges, questions, and uncertainties. Whether you're a first-time mom or an experienced parent, this guide is designed to provide you with the information and resources you need throughout your pregnancy journey.

During pregnancy, it's important to take care of both your physical and mental health. You'll need to make informed decisions about nutrition, exercise, prenatal care, and more—all while navigating the ups and downs of pregnancy. By taking an active role in your health and well-being, and seeking support when needed, you can optimize your chances of having a healthy pregnancy and a positive birth experience. This guide is intended to help you do just that.



What to expect

An overview of the stages of pregnancy

Pregnancy can be an overwhelming journey to navigate. Outlined below is an overview of your three trimesters and the postpartum period, the possible symptoms you may experience at each stage, the frequency of appointments you may have with your obstetrician or midwife, and the types of tests to expect throughout your pregnancy.



Embryo and fetal development
Months 1–9

First trimester: 1–13 weeks

Appointments

- First prenatal appointment: sometime between 6–12 weeks
- Expect monthly visits during the first trimester

Routine tests and screenings

- Blood pressure and weight measurements
- Blood test: complete blood count (CBC), rH factor, blood type, infectious diseases, sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Measurement of baby's heart rate using an ultrasound or doppler
- Measurement of your abdomen (stomach) to check your baby's growth
- Nuchal translucency screening ultrasound to screen for increased risks of chromosomal or physical abnormalities
- Pap smear (if you haven't had one in the last year)
- Ultrasound to measure and date your pregnancy
- Urinalysis (urine test)

Optional:

- Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT): blood test that examines your growing baby's DNA to determine their risk of having certain genetic or chromosomal conditions such as Down's syndrome
- Chorionic villus sampling (CVS): involves testing the placenta to confirm whether your growing baby has a genetic condition



Common symptoms

- Bloating
- Constipation
- Extreme fatigue
- Food cravings and aversions
- Frequent urination
- Headaches
- Heartburn
- Mood swings
- Nausea and vomiting
- Tender, swollen breasts
- Weight gain

*This section provides examples for what you can expect as you progress through your pregnancy; however, it's not intended to be a complete list of all symptoms and potential screenings and tests. If you experience any concerning symptoms or if you have questions regarding your care, always talk to your care provider.

Second trimester: 14–27 weeks

Appointments

- Expect monthly visits during the second trimester

Routine tests and screenings

- Glucose challenge test: used to screen for gestational diabetes between weeks 24–28 and involves drinking a sugary beverage and measuring your body's response to glucose (sugar)
- Maternal blood screening (quad screen): used to detect high or low levels of certain blood markers that may indicate whether your growing baby is at risk for having a genetic disorder
- Measurement of your abdomen (stomach) to check your baby's growth
- Ultrasound (anatomy scan): typically occurs between 18–22 weeks to measure baby's growth and development
- Weight and blood pressure measurements

Optional:

- Amniocentesis: involves testing a small amount of amniotic fluid (liquid that surrounds the baby) to see if your growing baby has a genetic condition or other health concern



Common symptoms

- Back pain and body aches
- Dark line on the skin that runs from your belly button to your pubic area (linea nigra)
- Dark patches on the face (melasma)
- Darkened skin around nipples
- Pain in the abdomen near the hips (round ligament pain)
- Stretch marks
- Swelling of the face, fingers, and ankles
- Swollen, bleeding gums

Third trimester: 28–40+ weeks

Appointments

- 28–36 weeks: two visits per month
- 36–41 weeks: weekly visits

Routine tests and screenings

- Group B strep (GBS): tests for an infection that can be passed to your baby during delivery
- Pelvic exams: performed to determine whether your cervix is preparing for delivery
- Urinalysis (urine test)
- Weight and blood pressure measurements



Common symptoms

- Braxton Hicks contractions
- Fatigue
- Frequent urination
- Leakage of colostrum (a yellow secretion) from your nipples
- Shortness of breath
- Sleeping problems
- Stretch marks
- Stronger feelings of your baby's movements and kicks
- Swollen, bleeding gums

*These sections provide examples for what you can expect as you progress through your pregnancy; however, they are not intended to be a complete list of all symptoms and potential screenings and tests. If you experience any concerning symptoms or if you have questions regarding your care, always talk to your care provider.

Postpartum

Appointments

- Postpartum appointment around 4–6 weeks after delivery

Routine tests and screenings

- Pelvic exam: performed to ensure that you're healing properly after birth

*This section provides examples for what you can expect as you progress through your pregnancy; however, it's not intended to be a complete list of all symptoms and potential screenings and tests. If you experience any concerning symptoms or if you have questions regarding your care, always talk to your care provider.



Common symptoms

- Back pain
- Bleeding from the vagina
- Bowel and bladder problems (incontinence)
- Cramping
- Hemorrhoids
- Mood changes

Common pregnancy-related concerns

While not everyone will experience complications, being aware of some of the potential risks and symptoms associated with common pregnancy concerns can help you recognize them early and seek appropriate medical care.

Gestational diabetes

Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy. It causes high blood sugar levels, which can be harmful to both you and your baby. Gestational diabetes can be managed with dietary changes, exercise, and medication. You'll likely be screened for gestational diabetes between 24 and 28 weeks using a test called a glucose challenge test. Gestational diabetes goes away after you give birth; however, having gestational diabetes can increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.





Is my nausea normal?

Nausea usually starts around six to eight weeks of pregnancy and often subsides by about 14 weeks. It's normal to experience nausea all day or for short bursts during the day. Some people may experience vomiting once or twice per day, and others may experience none at all. If you're unable to keep any food or liquids down, or if you're experiencing multiple bouts of vomiting per day, weight loss, or signs of severe dehydration (dark urine, infrequent urination, lightheadedness), talk to your care provider.

Nausea and vomiting

Nausea and vomiting are common during pregnancy, affecting up to 70% of pregnant people. Although often referred to as "morning sickness," nausea and vomiting can occur throughout the day. It's most common in the first trimester; however, symptoms can last for the entire duration of the pregnancy. See the Appendix section for tips for addressing nausea and vomiting during pregnancy.

A less common and more severe form of nausea in pregnancy is called hyperemesis gravidarum (HG). HG affects approximately 3% of pregnant women and can cause significant dehydration and other serious issues that may require hospitalization.

Iron-deficiency anemia

Iron-deficiency anemia occurs when the body's iron stores are low, resulting in insufficient healthy red blood cells. Your blood volume increases during pregnancy, which can dilute the amount of iron in your blood, leading to iron deficiency. Left untreated, iron deficiency anemia can lead to complications such as depression, an increased risk of infection, and some pregnancy complications.

Depression and anxiety

Mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety are common during pregnancy, especially if you experienced either before pregnancy. If you're struggling with overwhelming feelings of worry, nervousness, or sadness, talk to your healthcare provider for guidance.

High blood pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) is common during pregnancy, affecting up to one in every 12 pregnancies. Left untreated, high blood pressure can lead to several pregnancy complications such as preeclampsia, stroke, preterm birth, and low birth weight. Manage your blood pressure by seeking regular prenatal care, continuing to take prescribed medications according to your provider's recommendations, following a healthy diet, keeping track of your blood pressure using an at-home blood pressure monitor or public blood pressure kiosk machines at pharmacies, and contacting your provider if you experience symptoms of preeclampsia.

Did you know?

Preeclampsia is a life-threatening condition that can occur during pregnancy (usually after 20 weeks) or shortly after birth. It's characterized by high blood pressure and protein in the urine. Typical symptoms include:



- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain in the upper stomach
- Persistent headache
- Swelling of the face or hands
- Trouble breathing
- Vision changes (blurred vision, spots in vision)

Preterm labor

Preterm labor refers to the onset of labor before the 37th week of pregnancy. Babies born before 37 weeks are more likely to experience health issues such as breathing problems and developmental delays. Preterm labor may be accompanied by contractions of the uterus, pelvic pressure, changes in vaginal discharge (watery, bloody, or containing mucus), back pain, or a gush or trickling of fluids (occurs when your water breaks). It's important to seek medical attention if you experience any symptoms of preterm labor, as healthcare providers may be able to take steps to delay the onset of labor and improve outcomes for your baby.

Pregnancy loss

The loss of a pregnancy before 13 weeks is referred to as an early pregnancy loss. Pregnancy loss occurs in approximately 10% of known pregnancies and is most often caused by chromosomal abnormalities that prevent the embryo (fertilized egg) from growing normally. The risk for loss is the highest in the first six weeks of pregnancy—that's about four weeks past ovulation. Talk to your practitioner if you experience vaginal bleeding, pain, or passage of clots or tissue. While some bleeding can be normal during pregnancy, it may also be a sign of pregnancy loss.

I'm experiencing bleeding. Is that normal?

Bleeding and spotting during pregnancy doesn't always indicate a serious problem. Cervical irritation triggered by pelvic exams or sex can cause light bleeding. Another common and generally harmless cause of bleeding in the first trimester is subchorionic hemorrhage. This occurs when blood pools under one of the membranes that surrounds the embryo inside the uterus. Always notify your practitioner right away if you're experiencing spotting or bleeding; they can determine the cause through an examination and ultrasound.



Prenatal nutrition

Eating a balanced diet is always important, but it's especially important during pregnancy. Ensure your baby gets the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development by eating a wide variety of foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, eggs, dairy, meat, poultry, and fish. Eating well will also help you gain a healthy amount of weight and reduce your chances of various pregnancy-related complications such as pregnancy loss, gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, and preterm labor.

Essential nutrients during pregnancy

Your growing baby relies on you for their nutritional needs. Eating a healthy, balanced diet can help you meet your higher nutrient demands during pregnancy. Refer to the table below for a list of some of the most important nutrients and some common dietary sources.

Nutrient	Benefits for mom	Benefits for baby	Daily recommended amount	Food sources
Calcium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps maintain healthy bones and teeth• Reduces the risk of blood clots and high blood pressure during pregnancy (preeclampsia)• Promotes muscle and nerve function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps build healthy bones and teeth• Promotes muscle and nerve function	1,000 mg	Dairy products, sardines, spinach, kale, tofu
Choline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps regulate memory and mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes brain and spinal cord development	450 mg	Milk, liver, eggs, peanuts, soy products
Fiber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevents constipation• Promotes healthy blood sugar regulation and appropriate weight gain during pregnancy		>28 g	Fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, whole grains (oats, brown rice)

Nutrient	Benefits for mom	Benefits for baby	Daily recommended amount	Food sources
Folate (folic acid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps support cell division and red and white blood cell production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the growth and development of the placenta and unborn baby Prevents birth abnormalities of the brain and spinal cord 	600 mcg	Dark leafy greens, asparagus, green peas, peanuts, beans, fortified foods (cereal, enriched bread and pasta)
Iodine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports thyroid function 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes healthy brain development 	220 mcg	Iodized table salt, seaweed, dairy products, seafood, meat, eggs
Iron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps carry oxygen to your body's cells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps red blood cells carry oxygen to your baby 	27 mg	Red meat, poultry, fish, dried beans and peas, fortified foods (cereal, rice, pasta)
Omega-3 fatty acids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps regulate mood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes healthy eye and brain development 	200 mg docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)	Fatty fish (salmon, sardines), flaxseed, chia seeds
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports increasing blood supply during pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages growth and development 	<p>First trimester: 0.66 g/kg of body weight per day*</p> <p>For example, a 68 kg (150 lb) person needs about 45 g of protein per day.</p> <p>Second and third trimester: 0.88 g/kg of body weight per day.</p> <p>For example, a person weighing 68 kg (150 lbs) needs about 60 g of protein per day.</p>	Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds



Nutrient	Benefits for mom	Benefits for baby	Daily recommended amount	Food sources
Vitamin A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes healthy eyesight Supports immune health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms skin Promotes healthy eyesight Promotes bone development 	770 mcg	Carrots, green leafy vegetables, sweet potatoes, liver
Vitamin C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes healthy gums, teeth, and bones Supports immune health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes healthy gums, teeth, and bones 	85 mg	Citrus fruit, broccoli, peppers, tomatoes, strawberries
Vitamin D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps build healthy bones and teeth Promotes healthy eyes and skin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps build healthy bones and teeth Promotes healthy eyes and skin 	600 IU	Sun exposure, fortified milk, fatty fish (salmon, sardines)
Vitamin B6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes red blood cell formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes red blood cell formation 	1.9 mg	Beef, liver, pork, whole-grain cereals, bananas
Vitamin B12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes red blood cell formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes red blood cell formation Prevents spina bifida and other spinal and central nervous system birth abnormalities 	2.6 mcg	Meat, fish, poultry, milk, nutritional yeast, fortified foods (cereals, non-dairy milk substitutes)

*It's important to remember that the amount of protein you need per day will increase as you progress through your second and third trimesters. Be sure to recalculate how much protein you need per day on a monthly basis.

Prenatal vitamins

While a balanced diet is important, a prenatal multivitamin and fish oil can help you fill nutrient gaps in your diet during pregnancy. If you're not already taking a prenatal vitamin, speak to your obstetrician or midwife for recommendations.

Foods to avoid during pregnancy

Extra precautions are necessary during pregnancy to keep you and your baby safe. For example, mercury exposure from fish, microbial contamination from risky foods, and exposure to harmful substances like alcohol can increase the risk of birth abnormalities, pregnancy loss, stillbirth, and more. Below are some common foods and beverages to avoid and some safe alternatives.

Foods to avoid	Choose instead
Raw or undercooked fish or shellfish (sushi, raw oysters, scallops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fish and shellfish cooked to an internal temperature of 145°F (63°C)• Sushi that only includes vegetables (avocado, cucumber, asparagus) or cooked fish and shellfish (crab, cooked prawns)
High-mercury fish (shark, swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-mercury fish (salmon, sardines, anchovies, catfish)
Raw or undercooked meats, poultry, or eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meat cooked to an internal temperature of at least 145°F (63°C)• Ground meat cooked to an internal temperature of at least 160°F (71°C)• Ground poultry cooked to an internal temperature of at least 165°F (74°C)• Poultry cooked to an internal temperature of at least 165°F (74°C)
Unpasteurized juice, milk, or cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pasteurized juice, milk, or cheese
Lunch or deli meats, smoked seafood, and hot dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deli meats heated to at least 165°F
Prepared/store-bought meat or seafood salads (chicken salad, tuna salad)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homemade meat or seafood salads
Raw sprouts (alfalfa sprouts, mung bean sprouts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fresh herbs (cilantro, parsley, basil, dill)• Leafy greens (romaine lettuce, arugula)
Alcohol (wine, beer, liquor, kombucha)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hot or iced tea• Mocktails• Pasteurized juice• Sparkling water

Daily calorie recommendations

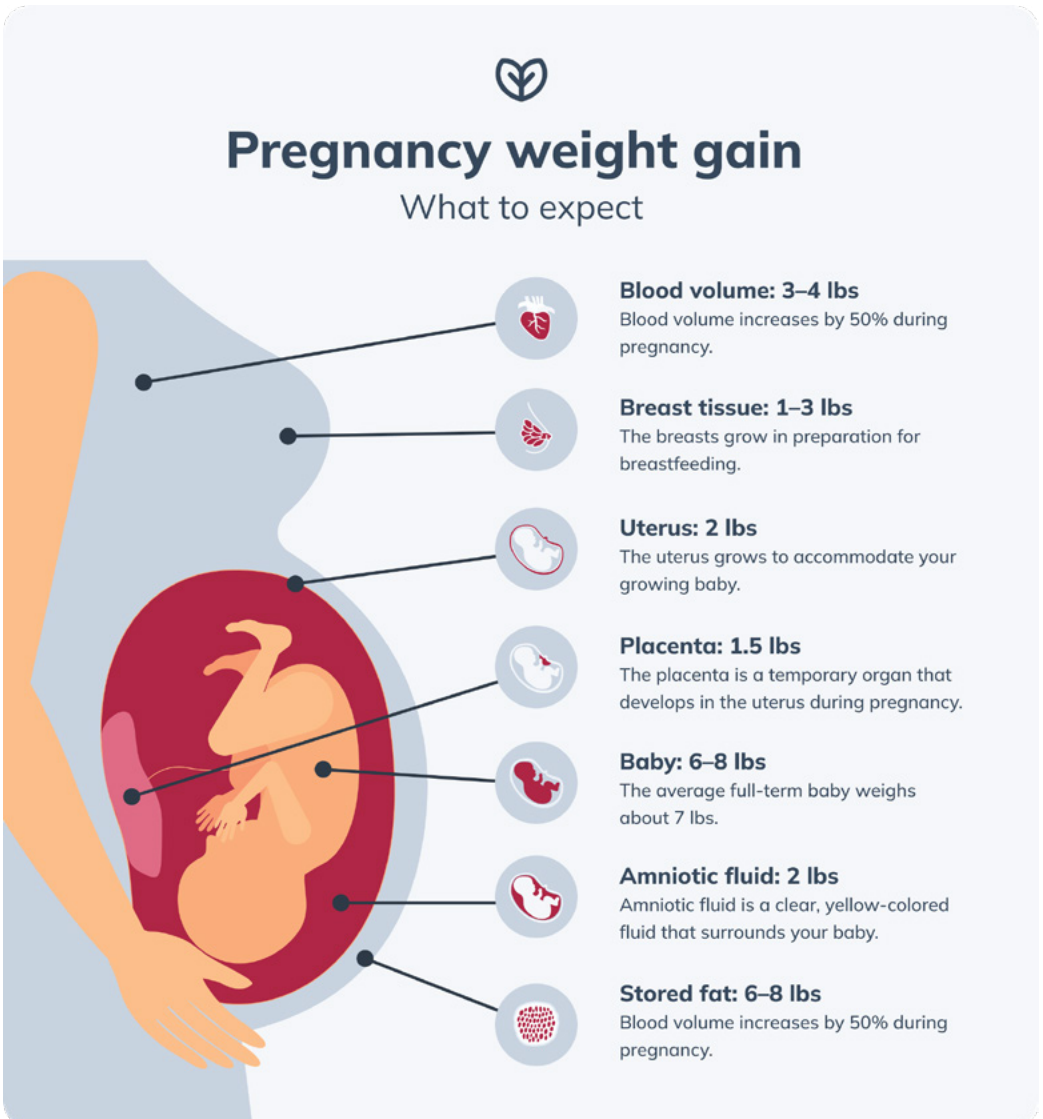
Most pregnant people only require about 300 to 500 additional calories per day in their second and third trimesters—that's equivalent to one to two healthy snacks per day. If you're carrying multiple babies, you may need an additional 600 to 900 calories per day in your second and third trimesters.



Healthy weight gain recommendations

Weight gain is a natural part of pregnancy. But how much weight gain is normal?

Recommended weight gain is largely determined by your pre-pregnancy body mass index (BMI), a commonly used measure of body fat based on height and weight. Generally speaking, individuals with higher pre-pregnancy weights don't need to gain as much weight as someone who was underweight or at a healthy weight pre-pregnancy.



Gaining too little weight during pregnancy has been shown to increase the risk of delivering a baby with a low birth weight. Risks of low birth weight include breastfeeding difficulties and developmental delays.

Gaining too much weight can also put your baby at risk. Excessive weight gain is associated with having a larger baby, which can complicate delivery, increase your likelihood of requiring a cesarean section (C-section), or increase your child's risk of childhood obesity.

Refer to the table below for weight gain recommendations based on your pre-pregnancy weight.

Pre-pregnancy weight	Pregnant with one baby	Pregnant with twins
Underweight (BMI < 18.5)	28–40 lbs	50–62 lbs
Normal weight (BMI 18.5–24.9)	25–35 lbs	37–54 lbs
Overweight (BMI 25–29.9)	15–25 lbs	31–50 lbs
Obese (BMI ≥ 30)	11–20 lbs	25–42 lbs

Pregnancy nutrition tips

Follow these tips to help you stay nourished and feeling your best throughout your pregnancy.



Eat small, frequent meals. If you're experiencing nausea or heartburn during your pregnancy, eating smaller meals throughout the day may help ease or prevent symptoms.



Eat a variety of foods. Eating a range of foods from each food group can help ensure that you're meeting your nutritional needs. When possible, opt for minimally processed foods such as lean meat, poultry, fish, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, and whole grains



Limit triggering foods and beverages. Carbonated beverages, as well as spicy, high-fat, or acidic foods, may trigger heartburn and other digestive issues. Try to limit or avoid these items if they cause you problems.



Focus on fiber. Enjoying fiber-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, and beans each day can help relieve or prevent constipation and regulate blood sugar levels. Diets high in fiber are associated with a reduced risk of preeclampsia, a life-threatening condition characterized by high blood pressure and kidney damage.



Stay hydrated. Drinking enough water is especially important during pregnancy as water helps promote healthy digestion, forms the amniotic fluid that surrounds your baby during your pregnancy, and helps circulate nutrients throughout the body. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that pregnant individuals drink about eight to 12 cups (64 to 96 oz) of water per day.



Watch your caffeine intake. Studies show that moderate caffeine consumption—less than 200 mg per day, or about two cups of brewed coffee—is safe during pregnancy. However, too much caffeine may put your baby at risk, so limit your consumption or opt for caffeine-free alternatives like decaffeinated coffee or herbal tea.



Keep healthy snacks within reach. Having convenient snacks readily available can keep you full between meals and help you meet your increased nutrient needs in the second and third trimesters. Trail mix, fresh fruit, cheese, peanut butter with crackers, hummus with raw vegetables, and granola bars are all great options.



Ask for help. Whether you're experiencing nausea, sensitivity to certain smells, or overwhelming fatigue that makes meal preparation difficult, asking your partner, a family member, or close friend for assistance can help ensure that you're eating consistent meals. If it's financially feasible, meal delivery services can be a convenient option as well.





Exercise during pregnancy

Regular, light-to-moderate physical activity can provide many health benefits for both mom and baby. While you should always consult your healthcare provider for guidance, in most cases, pregnant individuals who are not experiencing complications can safely engage in various types of exercise.

Benefits of exercise during pregnancy

Exercising regularly during pregnancy can help:

- Improve your general fitness
- Promote healthy weight gain during pregnancy and weight loss after pregnancy
- Relieve constipation and low-back pain
- Reduce anxiety and depression
- Support heart and blood vessel function
- Support postpartum recovery

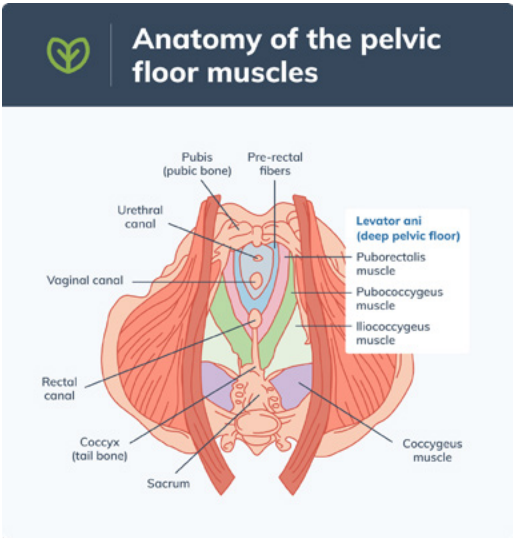
Exercising during pregnancy can also reduce your risk of:

- C-section
- Excessive weight gain
- Gestational diabetes
- Low birth weight and preterm (premature) birth of your baby
- Preeclampsia

Pregnancy-safe exercises

Your body goes through numerous changes during pregnancy. This affects the types of exercise you can do safely.

Type of exercise	Description
Pilates	Prenatal pilates can help you prepare for labor and delivery by reducing pain and stress, and strengthening your pelvic floor.
Resistance training	Resistance training, such as lifting weights or using resistance bands, strengthens bones and muscles.
Stationary biking/spinning	Riding a stationary bike or taking a spin class are great aerobic workouts and reduce the risk of falling associated with riding a standard bicycle.
Swimming/water aerobics	Water aerobics can provide a full-body workout. The water supports your weight, helping reduce the risk of injury and muscle strain.
Walking	Brisk walking and hiking are low-impact, total-body workouts that are easy on the joints and muscles.
Yoga	Yoga can help you prepare for childbirth by reducing stress and improving mobility and strength. This form of exercise focuses on breathwork and mindfulness, which may help reduce labor pain and the risk of developing complications. There are also specific yoga classes designed for pregnant individuals.



Pelvic floor exercises

Pregnancy and childbirth can increase your risk of developing pelvic floor dysfunction and disorders, such as issues with bladder and bowel control. Your pelvic floor—a group of muscles that form a hammock across the bone structure at the bottom of the pelvis—support your pelvic organs, your core, and their many functions.

For those experiencing pelvic floor dysfunction, a physical therapist may recommend treatment including manual therapy, exercises, and stretches. Kegel exercises, for example, are a common form of pelvic floor training that involves routinely squeezing and relaxing pelvic floor muscles to improve symptoms of prolapse (occurs when one or more of the pelvic organs drops or presses into the vagina due to weakened pelvic muscles) and urinary incontinence. Additionally, many exercises that build strong gluteal muscles, such as squats and bridges, can also help promote pelvic floor strength.

Exercises to avoid during pregnancy

While exercising safely can provide many benefits, it's important to be aware of the exercises and environments that you should avoid throughout your pregnancy.

Consideration	Guideline	Examples
Falls and trauma	Avoid exercises that increase your risk for falls or trauma.	Outdoor cycling, gymnastics, horseback riding, skating, downhill skiing
Supine position	Avoid doing exercises while lying on your back after your first trimester (16 weeks).	Supine leg raises, crunches
Altitude and depth	Avoid exercising in high altitudes or low depths.	Hiking in high-altitude regions, scuba diving
Intensity	Avoid high-intensity, vigorous activities.	Sprinting, powerlifting
Temperature	Avoid exercising in excessive heat or cold.	Hot yoga

Tips for exercising during pregnancy

Follow these tips to help you stay safe and comfortable while exercising during your pregnancy.



Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise. Water is essential for hydration and temperature regulation, and your body can lose several cups of water during exercise.



Meet your nutritional needs. Ensure you're eating enough to meet your nutritional needs for exercise and pregnancy. Your body has higher nutritional needs when you're pregnant. Ensure that you consume enough calories and nutrients to meet the needs of your exercise program as well as your pregnancy.



Dress appropriately. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing, activity-appropriate footwear, and a supportive bra. A good-quality sports bra will help to support and protect your breasts. A belly support belt can also be worn later in pregnancy for extra comfort and support.



Take precautions. Follow the tips below to ensure you're exercising safely:

- Avoid exercising in hot and humid temperatures.
- Avoid jumping, hopping, skipping, twisting, and taking part in activities with an increased risk of falls or injury.
- Avoid holding your breath for an extended period of time.
- Be careful not to exercise to the point of exhaustion and don't engage in sporadic, intense bursts of exercise, followed by long periods of no physical activity.
- Get up slowly after doing any sitting or floor exercises. Take your time getting up from either sitting or lying in order to prevent dizziness.

For a list of prenatal exercise mobile apps, refer to the Appendix section.

When to contact your practitioner

For certain people, exercise is not recommended during pregnancy. Ask your healthcare provider for guidance, and don't engage in exercise if you experience:

- Bleeding or excess fluid gushing from the vagina
- Calf pain or swelling
- Chest pain, heart palpitations, or unusual sensations in the chest
- Cramping or pain in the back or pelvic area
- Dizziness/lightheadedness
- Persistent contractions





Self-care and mental health

Pregnancy can be a challenging and emotional journey. Stress and anxiety during pregnancy is very common; however, high stress levels can have harmful effects on you and your baby. Research suggests that high levels of stress during pregnancy can lead to complications such as preterm birth and low birth weight.

Taking care of your mental health during pregnancy and into the postpartum period involves many strategies, such as seeking support from professionals, staying socially connected, developing positive coping strategies, and engaging in regular self-care activities.

Managing your emotional well-being during pregnancy

Pregnancy can bring on a lot of emotional and physical changes that can be difficult to cope with. Hormonal changes, mood swings, anxiety about your baby's health, fear of childbirth, and concerns about entering parenthood can all contribute to emotional stress.

Pregnancy can also trigger or worsen underlying mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety, which can have negative effects on you and your baby. In fact, research has shown that there is a strong link between maternal mental health and infant health outcomes, including preterm birth, low birth weight, and difficulties with bonding.

If you're experiencing depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns during your pregnancy, talk to your healthcare provider. They can direct you to a mental health professional to make treatment recommendations that are pregnancy-safe and appropriate for your condition. Seeking help can also involve talking to your partner, a close friend, or a family member about your feelings and experiences or joining a support group.



Important note about medications

If you're taking medication to help manage your mental health condition, let your obstetrician or midwife know as soon as you're pregnant. Unless directed by your provider, don't stop taking your medication. Abruptly stopping your medication may lead to relapse. In many cases, mental health medications can be taken safely in pregnancy, and the risk of not taking your medication can often outweigh the potential risk to your unborn baby. If you're taking a medication that's not safe to take during pregnancy, your care team may provide a suitable alternative.

Practicing self-care

Prioritizing self-care during your pregnancy can help promote overall well-being and support your physical and emotional health. How you practice self-care may look different from how someone else practices. Ultimately, you should try to participate in activities that make you feel your best, whether it's engaging in physical activity, taking a bath, getting involved in a hobby, or spending time outdoors, to name a few.

Types of **self-care**



Self-care includes a variety of practices, such as:

 Mental health	 Physical health	 Environmental health	 Aspirational health
<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Managing stress with relaxing activities (hobbies, listening to music, meditation, breathing exercises)→ Participating in social activities and building supportive relationships→ Getting adequate sleep and rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Eating a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity→ Maintaining good personal hygiene→ Seeking medical assistance when ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Maintaining a healthy and safe environment (a clean home)→ Spending time in nature (gardening, walking outdoors)→ Taking time away from screens (computer, smartphone, television)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Carving out time for a hobby or self-improvement→ Seeking out professional development and/or mentorship→ Working on a budget or financial plan

The health benefits of practicing self-care extend beyond pregnancy. Some benefits include:

- Burnout prevention (preventing feelings of emotional exhaustion, loss of self identity)
- Disease prevention and/or management
- Enhanced life satisfaction
- Improved quality of life and overall well-being through healthy lifestyle habits (physical and psychological health)
- Stress management and reduced stress

Getting quality sleep

Studies have noted that certain lifestyle practices, collectively referred to as sleep hygiene, are correlated with superior sleep quality. Sleep hygiene is defined as a set of practices and behaviors that help promote adequate and good quality sleep. The recommendations below outline common sleep hygiene practices that may help you achieve a better and more restorative night's sleep.



Follow a regular sleep schedule. Insomnia and poor sleep have been associated with an irregular sleep schedule. Establishing a regular bedtime routine, as well as consistent bedtimes and wake times can be helpful. A relaxing bedtime routine may include meditation, light stretching, a warm shower or bath, and autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) stimulation. ASMR is a sensory experience triggered by auditory or visual stimuli. It's characterized by a calming “tingling” feeling in the neck or scalp areas.



Create an environment conducive to better sleep. Excess noise in the bedroom should be reduced as it may increase nighttime arousals and contribute to insomnia. Engaging in highly demanding activities or using screens (TV, cellphones, computers) in the bedroom should also be avoided. A proper mattress and pillow, a comfortable temperature (60–67°F, 15–19°C), humidifiers, fans or “white noise” machines, earplugs, and blackout curtains are all techniques that may contribute to a more comfortable and relaxing environment.



Find a comfortable sleeping position. As your pregnancy progresses and your belly gets larger, finding a comfortable sleeping position and getting quality sleep can become more challenging. Once you reach your second trimester, sleeping on your side with bent knees is generally recommended. Furthermore, many experts recommend sleeping on your left side to protect your liver and promote healthy blood flow. You may find that using a pregnancy pillow or propping up multiple pillows between your legs, under your belly, or behind your back provides extra comfort and support.



Avoid caffeine and triggering foods. Consuming caffeine later in the day, particularly close to bedtime, may contribute to sleep difficulties. The effects of caffeinated beverages, such as black tea, coffee, and soda, may last several hours after consumption. Citrus fruits, carbonated beverages, and heavy, rich, or spicy foods consumed close to bedtime may also contribute to sleep disruption in some individuals prone to digestive issues.



Ensure adequate exposure to sunlight. Exposure to natural light and darkness helps to regulate healthy sleep-wake cycles. Additionally, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with sleep disorders and symptoms, such as short sleep duration, poor sleep quality, and sleepiness. Allowing natural light in the house and spending time outdoors during the day, even in colder climates, may help reduce the risk of vitamin D deficiency, improve sensitivity to light, and help synchronize the body's circadian rhythms.



Engage in regular physical activity. Regular exercise may help improve sleep in both healthy individuals and those with sleep concerns. Refer to the Exercise during pregnancy section for exercise recommendations.



Incorporate stress management and relaxation techniques. Stress has been shown to negatively impact sleep. To minimize exposure to stress, incorporate stress management and relaxation techniques, such as:

- Accepting imperfection
- Balancing time between work and rest
- Changing negative thought patterns (like through cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT))
- Engaging in regular physical activity, at least 30 minutes, three to four times per week
- Establishing a daily routine and priorities
- Maintaining a balanced diet
- Setting realistic goals
- Utilizing body relaxation exercises (mindful breathing, progressive muscle relaxation)



Promoting positive body image

Your body undergoes significant physical changes during and after pregnancy. With these changes can come negative or worsening feelings about the way your body looks. Body image during pregnancy and in the postpartum period is a complex and sensitive issue. It's important to recognize that these changes are a natural and necessary part of pregnancy, and it's also normal to feel increasingly self-conscious about your changing body.

While you don't have complete control over how your body changes in pregnancy, you can adopt healthy coping strategies to help ease negative self-talk and feelings about your body. Examples of helping coping strategies include:

Practice self-compassion and positive self-talk. Practicing self-compassion may help you overcome the dissatisfaction you may have about your body that is often brought on by societal pressure to look a certain way. Practice self-compassion by writing a kind letter to yourself, engaging in simple self-care rituals such as taking a bath or taking a walk, or practicing mindfulness. For more information about practicing mindfulness, refer to the Appendix section of this guide.

Engage in regular exercise. Studies show that engaging in regular physical activity during pregnancy and beyond may help improve body image and reduce the odds or severity of depression and anxiety during pregnancy.

Express your feelings. Share your body image struggles with your partner or a close friend or family member. Talking about your feelings with another person can help you cope with feelings of stress.

Wear comfortable clothing that you can feel confident in. Wearing ill-fitting clothes can leave you feeling uncomfortable and self-conscious. As your body grows, invest in a few staple pieces that you feel confident in. If you'd prefer not to buy new clothes that you'll only be able to wear for a short period of time, consider a clothing subscription service. There are several online services that rent trendy maternity clothes for affordable prices.

Get enough sleep. Poor sleep quality is associated with body image dissatisfaction, so make sure you're prioritizing getting at least 7 hours of sleep per night.

Seek professional help. Reach out to a trusted mental health professional if your negative feelings about your body image become overwhelming.



Preparing for childbirth and the postpartum period

The arrival of your newborn will no doubt be a joyful time, but it may also come with a number of challenges. Planning ahead for labor and your new baby can help ease the transition. In addition to eating well, exercising regularly, and taking care of your mental health throughout your pregnancy, there are also many other ways you can prepare yourself, your family, and your home.

Choose your care providers

When you find out you're pregnant, one of the first decisions you'll make is choosing your healthcare provider or team. While many people have access to a primary care provider, like a family doctor, there are also other types of practitioners that provide various prenatal and postnatal care services.

Take the time to explore your options and find the right fit for you and your family. Some questions to consider when choosing your providers include:

- What types of services do they provide?
- What experience and credentials do they have?
- Does their approach to care align with my desires, values, and beliefs?
- Am I comfortable with them and are they easy to understand?
- Do I prefer a hospital, birth center, home birth?
- Will they be available for support during labor and delivery?

Types of providers

Family doctor (MD)	A medical doctor who specializes in providing primary care for individuals of all ages, including care during and after pregnancy
Naturopathic doctor (ND)	A healthcare practitioner who focuses on using integrative and individualized approaches to promote health and prevent illness in people of all ages, including pregnant individuals
Obstetrician/Gynecologist (OB/GYN)	A medical doctor who specializes in women's reproductive health, including pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care
Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist (Perinatologist)	An OB/GYN who has further specialized training in high-risk pregnancies and complex medical conditions during pregnancy
Nurse practitioner (NP)	An advanced practice registered nurse who can provide comprehensive prenatal care and have the authority to diagnose, treat, and manage pregnancy-related conditions
Midwife	A holistic healthcare professional who provides physical and emotional care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period
Certified Nurse-Midwife (CNM)	A registered nurse with advanced training in midwifery who may provide holistic and personalized prenatal care, including health assessments, prenatal exams, and education
Doula	A non-medical care provider who provides emotional, physical, and informational support to pregnant individuals and their partners throughout pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period
Lactation consultant	A healthcare professional who supports individuals before and after childbirth to assist with breastfeeding and address any difficulties or concerns

Create a birth plan

A birth plan is a document that you and your partner create that lets your healthcare provider and delivery team know your preferences for childbirth. Topics you can include in your birth plan include:

- Where you would like to give birth
- Who you would like to be present during your delivery
- Your preferences for pain management
- Your preferences for any medical interventions
- When and by whom the umbilical cord will be cut
- How you plan to feed your baby

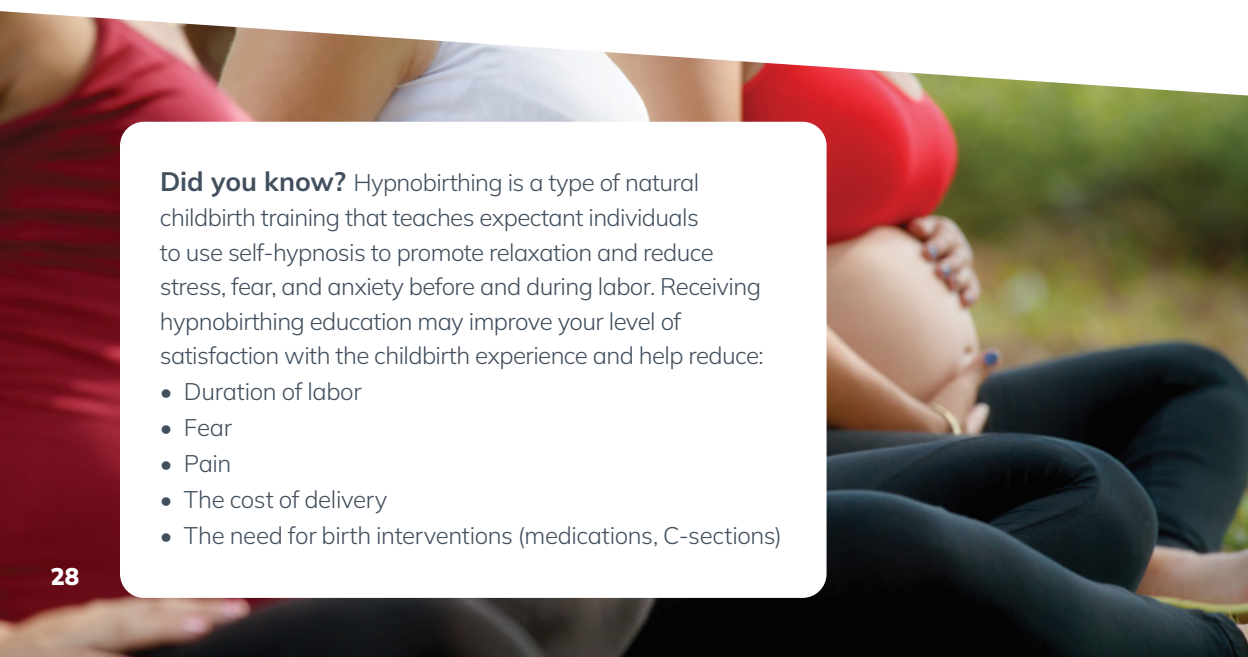
For a list of resources that can help you create your birth plan, refer to the Appendix section.

Take a childbirth class

It's common to feel overwhelmed with information when trying to learn about pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum life. Childbirth education classes can help you and your partner feel more prepared for childbirth and caring for your new baby.

Childbirth education classes usually include education on the following:

- Birthing positions
- Breastfeeding
- Caring for a newborn
- Family, social support, and resources
- How to navigate the hospital or birthing center once you arrive
- How to prepare a birth plan
- Hypnobirthing
- Mental health during and after pregnancy
- Mindfulness training
- Pain relief options
- Pain relief techniques
- Postpartum care
- Relaxation techniques
- Supplies needed if preparing for a homebirth
- The labor and delivery process
- What to expect from the various stages of pregnancy



Did you know? Hypnobirthing is a type of natural childbirth training that teaches expectant individuals to use self-hypnosis to promote relaxation and reduce stress, fear, and anxiety before and during labor. Receiving hypnobirthing education may improve your level of satisfaction with the childbirth experience and help reduce:

- Duration of labor
- Fear
- Pain
- The cost of delivery
- The need for birth interventions (medications, C-sections)

Connect with others

Pregnancy and the postpartum period can bring about significant physical, emotional, and lifestyle changes. As a result, social support during this time plays an essential role in the well-being of expectant and new parents. A strong community or social network provides emotional support and reduces feelings of isolation and depression.

Seek support from your partner, family, and friends. Attending prenatal classes or joining online support groups can also help you connect with other soon-to-be parents in your community.

Prepare your home and resources

During your pregnancy and leading up to childbirth, prepare your home for the arrival of your new baby. Create a comfortable and safe nursery, and gather essential items, such as a crib, a changing table, diapers, wipes, feeding supplies, clothes, and baby-friendly toiletries. Baby-proof your home for safety by covering electrical outlets and cords, installing baby gates, and securing cabinets. Stocking your fridge and freezer with nutritious and easy-to-prepare foods can reduce the time commitment and stress of making meals, especially during the first few weeks as you and your baby adjust to a new routine.

Make a list of resources, such as the contact information for your care team and resources for breastfeeding support. If you have a partner, share this information with them so they can help you find postpartum support if you need it. Refer to the Appendix section for a list of postpartum resources and a postpartum preparation checklist.

Pack your hospital/birth center bag

It can be very hectic and easy to forget things during labor. Packing a bag ahead of time to take with you can help ensure you'll be prepared when your baby arrives. Consider packing items for yourself, your new baby, and your support person, such as comfortable clothing, a diaper bag and toiletries, and any important documents you may need.

Refer to the Appendix section for a printable hospital/birth center bag checklist.



Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

What questions should I ask my practitioner at my prenatal visits?

Whether this is your first pregnancy or you're an experienced parent, you'll likely have many questions for your care provider. Refer to the Appendix section below for a printable list of questions to bring to your next prenatal visit.

What can I do to encourage a healthy pregnancy?

Eating a healthy diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and nurturing your mental health can help promote a healthy pregnancy. If you're struggling in any of these areas, talk to your care provider for recommendations.

How can I make sure I'm getting enough nutrients?

Eating a balanced diet that includes a range of foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, dairy products, eggs, and lean protein can help ensure you're getting the nutrients you need. A prenatal vitamin can also help fill gaps in your diet.

Is caffeine safe during pregnancy?

Moderate consumption of caffeine is considered safe during pregnancy. It's generally recommended that pregnant people limit their caffeine intake to no more than 200 mg of caffeine per day, or about two cups of coffee.

Can I eat fish during pregnancy?

It's safe to enjoy two or three servings of fish or shellfish per week during pregnancy. It's best to avoid high-mercury fish such as bigeye tuna, king mackerel, marlin, shark, swordfish, and orange roughy. Furthermore, limit white tuna (albacore) to no more than 6 oz per week. For more information about choosing safe seafood options, visit [Seafood Watch](#).

Is it safe to exercise?

It's usually safe to continue engaging in many of the same activities you engaged in before pregnancy; however, you may need to make some modifications. Always speak to your healthcare provider before beginning a new exercise routine. Refer to the Exercise during pregnancy section for more information about pregnancy-safe forms of exercise.

Can I take any over-the-counter medications?

Many medications are safe to take during pregnancy; however, some medications may put your growing baby at risk. While some medications have been proven to cause birth abnormalities and other complications, many medications have yet to be proven safe in pregnancy simply because of the ethical implications of studying their effects on pregnant people.

It's important to always talk to your healthcare provider before taking or continuing to take any over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as dietary supplements.

How do I know if my symptoms are normal?

It can be difficult to know what's considered "normal" during pregnancy, especially if it's your first pregnancy. While every pregnancy is different, there are some symptoms that are common and expected during pregnancy, such as nausea and vomiting, fatigue, heartburn, constipation, mood changes, backaches, and weight gain. If any of your symptoms are severe or if they begin to significantly interfere with your life, talk to your healthcare provider for guidance.

I'm struggling with my mental health during pregnancy. What can I do?

If you're struggling with your mental health during pregnancy, there are several things you can do to help manage your symptoms and get the support you need, including:

- Joining a support group
- Practicing self-care such as getting enough good-quality sleep, engaging in physical activity, and dedicating some time to relax and recharge
- Practicing mindfulness, meditation, and breathing techniques to reduce stress and anxiety
- Reaching out to your healthcare provider for recommendations
- Seeking support from friends and family

Remember, it's important to prioritize your health and seek help if you're struggling. Pregnancy can be an emotional and transformative time, but it's necessary to take care of yourself to ensure a healthy pregnancy and positive birth experience.

Is it safe to drink alcohol or use tobacco, marijuana, or other recreational drugs during pregnancy?

Drinking alcohol and smoking or vaping tobacco or marijuana is unsafe during pregnancy and shown to harm your growing baby. If you use any of these substances, it's important to quit now. Talk to your healthcare provider right away if you use any of these substances and you're having trouble quitting.

Appendix

Tips and checklists

Click on the links below to download the pregnancy resources found in this guide.

- [Questions to ask your prenatal care provider](#)
- [Tips for relieving nausea during pregnancy](#)
- [Tips to incorporate mindfulness](#)
- [Hospital/birth center bag checklist](#)
- [Postpartum support: Contact list](#)
- [Postpartum preparation checklist](#)

Sample birth plans

- [ACOG sample birth plan](#)
- [Earth Mama Organics birth plan](#)
- [Baby Center birth plan](#)
- [Mama Natural birth plan template](#)
- [The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada \(SOGC\) birth plan](#)
- [The Bump birth plan](#)

Websites and other resources

- [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#)
- [DONA International](#)
- [La Leche League International](#)
- [Moms' Mental Health Matters: Depression and Anxiety Around Pregnancy](#)
- [Office on Women's Health](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada \(SOGC\)](#)

Helpful apps

Pregnancy tracking and education apps



What to Expect

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



Ovia Pregnancy

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



The Bump

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



PregLife

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



BabyCenter Pregnancy

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)

Prenatal exercise apps



Baby 2 Body

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



Down Dog | Prenatal yoga

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



FitOn

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



ObeFitness

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)

Labor and delivery support apps



Freya Surge Timer

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



Full Term - Contraction Timer

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



Hypnobirthing: A Fit Pregnancy

[iOS](#) | [Google Play](#)



Questions to ask your prenatal care provider

Having access to information and asking the right questions can help you make informed decisions during and after your pregnancy. Outlined below are some questions to consider asking your obstetrician or midwife. Not all questions may apply to your care, so feel free to omit or modify any of the following questions. Don't hesitate to ask your healthcare provider any questions you may have about your pregnancy. Their goal is to support you in having a healthy, safe, and comfortable experience.

Prenatal visits

1. How often should I expect to come in for prenatal visits? What can I expect at these appointments?
2. Are there any specific prenatal vitamins or supplements I should take?
3. Are the medications and supplements I'm currently taking safe during pregnancy?
4. Can you provide some recommendations for safe, over-the-counter medications or remedies to alleviate pregnancy symptoms like headaches or sore muscles?

5. Who should I call if I have questions or concerns in between visits?
6. What is my estimated due date?
7. Are there any lifestyle changes I should consider during my pregnancy?
8. What are some pregnancy symptoms to expect and how can I manage them?
9. What kind of exercise or physical activity is safe during pregnancy?

Notes:

Labor, delivery, and postpartum

1. Which hospitals are you affiliated with?
2. Will you or another provider be delivering my baby?
3. What are the different options for giving birth, such as an unmedicated birth or a C-section?
What are the risks and benefits of each option?
4. When do you recommend going to the hospital during labor?
5. What do Braxton Hicks contractions feel like, and how do they differ from labor contractions?

6. What are my pain management options? What are the benefits and risks of each option?
7. Are there limits on how many support people I can have in the room with me during my delivery?
8. Are you open to me being in different positions while delivering my baby (on all fours, on my side, kneeling, etc.)?
9. What can I expect immediately after delivery?
10. How long should I expect to stay in the hospital or birth center after delivery?

11. Can you provide me with information on breastfeeding or formula feeding, and what support is available for both after delivery?

12. When should I expect to have a postpartum appointment with you?

Additional notes:



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn



Tips for relieving **nausea** during pregnancy



Eat small, frequent meals

and try to include a source of protein with each meal.



Opt for bland and easy-to-digest foods

such as bananas, applesauce, and toast when your nausea is flaring up.



Eat crackers or a piece of toast as soon as you wake up.

Sometimes having an empty stomach can trigger nausea.



Talk to your practitioner about supplementation options.

Supplements containing powdered ginger, vitamin B6, or a combination of the two may help reduce nausea.



Eat foods or drink beverages that contain ginger

such as dried ginger, ginger candies, or ginger tea.



Stay hydrated by sipping water throughout the day.

Dehydration can make nausea worse.



Avoid overwhelming smells that may trigger your nausea.

Use the exhaust fan while cooking, choose foods that don't have strong odors, and have your partner or a family member take the trash out.



Enjoy cold foods

instead of hot foods as the smell of hot foods can trigger nausea.



Continue taking your prenatal vitamins.

If you're having a difficult time keeping your vitamins down, talk to your practitioner about alternatives. Sometimes gummy or powdered prenatal vitamins can be more palatable.



Consider prescription or over-the-counter medications

if your nausea worsens. There are several pregnancy-safe medications available, so talk to your practitioner about your options.



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn



Tips to incorporate mindfulness



1. Start slowly.

Some of the challenges individuals commonly report with mindfulness practice include a lack of motivation and insufficient time. If you're new to mindfulness, you can start with meditating for one to three minutes per day, gradually building up from there.



2. Make it a habit.

Try to incorporate mindfulness practices consistently at the same time each day or week to help establish a regular routine. As with any activity, you may choose to add formal mindfulness practices to your schedule or set reminders to keep yourself on track.



3. Be patient with yourself.

Individuals new to mindfulness are often concerned about "not being able to do it" or unsure about whether they're "getting it right." Keep in mind that mindfulness practice shouldn't be focused on achieving an outcome but on the experience itself.

According to John Kabat-Zinn, a pioneer in contemporary mindfulness research and practice, "from the outset of practice, we are reminded that mindfulness is not about getting anywhere else or fixing anything. Rather, it is an invitation to allow oneself to be where one already is and to know the inner and outer landscape of the direct experience in each moment."



4. Try different types of mindfulness practice.

Discovering the mindfulness practices best suited to your lifestyle and preferences can help you stay committed long-term. Fortunately, there are many different types of mindfulness and meditation practices. You may want to try a variety of activities, ranging from informal mindfulness during your everyday activities to guided mindfulness meditation or movement-based practices, such as tai chi and yoga.



5. Engage your loved ones.

You might find it helpful to tell your family and friends about how you're incorporating mindfulness into your lifestyle. They may be able to offer social support or be interested in joining you while you learn about and practice mindfulness.



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn



Hospital/birth center bag checklist

Items for mom:

- ☐ Birth plan
- ☐ Bra and nursing bra
- ☐ Breast pads
- ☐ Comfortable and loose clothing
- ☐ Contact information of the healthcare provider who will be caring for your baby, so the hospital can let the office know your baby has arrived
- ☐ Extra-absorbent maxi pads
- ☐ Glasses, contacts, and saline solution
- ☐ Hair ties
- ☐ Hospital paperwork, insurance information, and identification (driver's license, health card)
- ☐ Pregnancy medical file, including over-the-counter and prescription medicine information
- ☐ Phone and phone charger
- ☐ Slippers
- ☐ Socks
- ☐ Toiletries (body lotion, body wash, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, toothbrush and paste, and lip balm)

Items for baby:

- ☐ Baby lotion and diaper cream
- ☐ Baby blanket and burp cloths
- ☐ Car seat
- ☐ Diaper bag
- ☐ Diapers
- ☐ Going-home outfit, including socks or booties and extra layers depending on the weather

Items for support person:

- ☐ Blanket or pillow
- ☐ Comfortable clothes (2–3 outfits)
- ☐ Phone and phone charger
- ☐ Toiletries (body lotion, body wash, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, toothbrush and paste, and lip balm)
- ☐ Undergarments



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn



Postpartum support:

Contact list

OB/GYN and/or midwife

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:

Hospital or birthing center

Address:

Contact information:

Doula

Name:

Contact information:

Lactation consultant

Name:

Contact information:

Local breastfeeding resources

Breastfeeding support groups/[La Leche League groups](#)

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:

Pediatrician

Name:

Contact information:

General support

Who can help care for me and my baby during my postpartum period?

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:

Childcare support

Who can provide childcare for my other children during my postpartum period?

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:

Pet support

Who can help take care of our pets during my postpartum period?

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:

Meal support

Who can help to prepare or deliver meals and/or snacks for our family during my postpartum period?

Name:

Contact information:

Name:

Contact information:



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn



Postpartum preparation checklist

Birth recovery

- ☐ Belly support band
- ☐ Comfortable, loose-fitting clothes
- ☐ Disposable postpartum underwear and postpartum pads
- ☐ Comfortable and loose clothing
- ☐ Ice packs
- ☐ Perineal spray
- ☐ Pain reliever
- ☐ Peri wash bottle
- ☐ Sitz bath
- ☐ Stool softener
- ☐ Witch hazel pads
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Nursing

- ☐ Breast pump
- ☐ Breastmilk storage bags
- ☐ Nipple cream
- ☐ Nursing bra
- ☐ Nursing pads
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Nutrition

- ☐ Prenatal vitamins
- ☐ Healthy snacks
(list any snacks you plan to purchase beforehand)
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ Frozen meals
(list any meals you plan to prepare beforehand)
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ Pantry essentials
(list any items you plan to purchase beforehand)
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐



For more educational content and resources: www.fullscript.com/learn





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