

EXPECTANT

MOM'S HANDBOOK

Worksheets, information, and planning for moms-to-be

SAMPLE



You're having a baby. **Congratulations!**

Bringing a baby into the world is exciting, but it can also feel overwhelming at times. This handbook will help keep you informed and confident every step of the way. Inside, you'll find checklists and worksheets to help you plan ahead, as well as information about each stage of pregnancy, preparing for your baby's arrival, and newborn care.

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My health care reference page

It's useful to have your essential contact information all in one place. Keep the information for your obstetrician or midwife, your health insurance provider, your hospital or birth center, pharmacy, pediatrician, and WIC provider here for quick and easy reference.

Obstetrician or Midwife
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

Health Insurance Provider
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

Hospital or Birth Center
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

Pharmacy
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

Pediatrician
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

WIC Local Agency
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

Other
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Address: _____

ESSENTIAL tips for a healthy pregnancy

It's best to talk to your doctor about what is safe and healthy, but here is a handy guide of some things to avoid.

DO NOT eat, drink, or consume the following while pregnant.



Deli meats, raw eggs, raw or undercooked meats, raw sprouts, and uncooked sushi. Raw foods may contain bacteria and illness-inducing parasites, which can harm your baby. Cook your eggs and meats thoroughly, and steam or microwave deli meat before you eat it.

King mackerel, shark, swordfish, tilefish and shellfish. These varieties of fish contain high levels of mercury that can affect your baby's nervous system.

Unpasteurized soft cheeses, milk, and juice. Make sure your milk, cheeses, and juices are pasteurized—a process that kills any harmful bacteria.

Herbal supplements, teas, and medicines not approved by your doctor. Make sure to consult your doctor before taking any vitamins, natural herbs, or teas during your pregnancy.

Alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drugs like marijuana. These substances can be harmful to your developing baby.

DO NOT get too hot.

Save the sauna, hot tub, and very hot baths until after your pregnancy. Pregnant woman are more likely to have low blood pressure and suffer from dehydration and dizziness. These symptoms may become worse in high heat.

DO NOT handle cat litter, or garden without gloves.

Cat litter, or soils where cats have been, may contain the *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite. This infection can be passed on to your baby. It's best to avoid scooping the litter box during pregnancy.



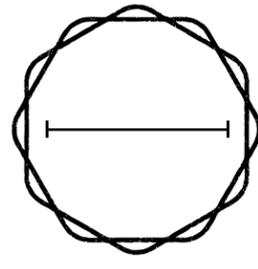
BABY'S developmental milestones

FIRST trimester checklist (weeks 1 to 13)

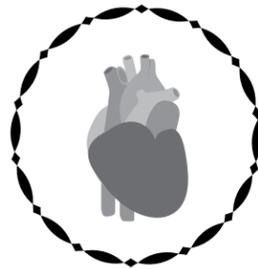
Your baby will go through many changes during the nine months of development! Here's an overview of what those changes will look like.



Weeks 1 to 4:
By week 4 your baby will be about the size of a berry. Amniotic fluid collects around the embryo, and the placenta begins to form.



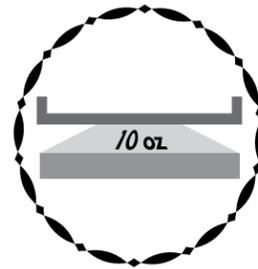
Weeks 5 to 8:
By the end of week 8 your baby will be about 1 inch long. The heart starts to beat and the bones begin to form.



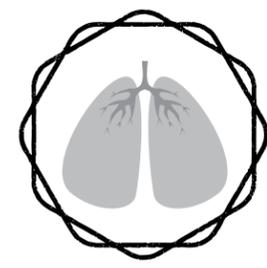
Weeks 9 to 12:
By the end of week 12 your baby will be about 3 inches long. The organs continue to develop, and the heart divides into four chambers.



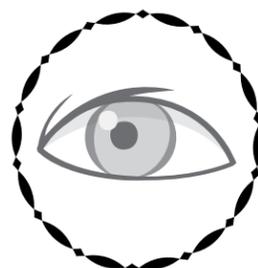
Weeks 13 to 16:
By week 16 your baby will be about 5 inches long! The ears and eyes continue to form.



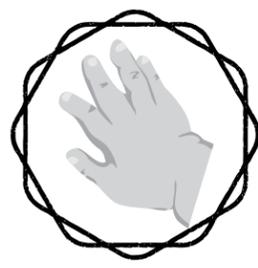
Weeks 17 to 20:
By week 20 your baby will be around 8 inches and will weigh about 10 ounces. Fat tissue will begin to form, and hair will start to grow.



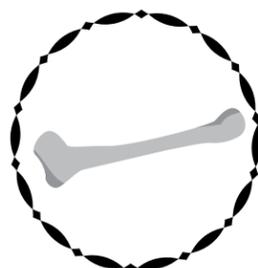
Weeks 21 to 24:
By week 24 your baby will weigh about 1 pound. The brain, lungs, and digestive system continue to develop.



Weeks 25 to 28:
During this time your baby will begin to open and close his or her eyes. Your baby is moving a lot now and has regular cycles of sleep and awake time. By week 28 he or she will be over 14 inches long.



Weeks 29 to 32:
Your baby will continue to put on weight during these weeks. The toenails and fingernails have formed, and he or she can see light and darkness.



Weeks 33 to 36:
By the end of week 36 your baby will be around 19 inches long. Bones begin to harden and kidneys continue to develop. Your baby will spend the next few weeks putting on weight.



Weeks 37 to 40:
At 37 weeks your baby is considered full term. At some point during the last few weeks, he or she will move into the birth position, ready for delivery!

Schedule your first prenatal appointment. Regular checkups and prenatal testing help keep you and your baby healthy, and enable your health care provider to spot problems early on.

The number of prenatal appointments you'll need depends on your unique pregnancy experience, but here are some general guidelines:

- Up to 28 weeks pregnant, see your caregiver every 4 to 5 weeks.
- From 28 to 36 weeks pregnant, see your caregiver every 2 to 3 weeks.
- From 36 weeks to delivery, see your caregiver every 1 to 2 weeks.

Be ready for physical changes. You may experience nausea and vomiting, fatigue, odd food cravings, sore breasts, and frequent bathroom trips as your belly grows. Later in pregnancy, swollen ankles, stretch marks, and varicose veins are common. The good news? Most changes will fade after pregnancy.

Be aware of your emotional health. At least 1 in 10 pregnant women suffer from bouts of depression, due in part to hormonal changes that can affect your brain chemistry. Being informed can help if it happens to you.

Adopt healthy habits. When you're pregnant, a healthy lifestyle is important. Take a prenatal vitamin supplement, eat a nutritious diet, stay hydrated, find pregnancy-friendly ways to exercise, and get plenty of sleep. If you have trouble falling asleep, try sleeping on your left side. This will relieve pressure on major blood vessels that supply oxygen and nutrients to your baby.

Do your research. There's a lot of information available about pregnancy and what you should and shouldn't do. Ask your health care provider if you're not sure.

FEELING NAUSEOUS?

Morning sickness is common in the first trimester and can make you feel terrible, but it's actually a good sign! It means that the levels of pregnancy hormones in your body are high. Try these tips to ease nausea:

1. Eat small, frequent meals.
2. Prepare a protein-rich bedtime snack like a slice of cheese or a spoonful of peanut butter. Having saltine crackers at the bedside to snack on may ease these symptoms as well.
3. Stay hydrated. Dehydration may make your nausea worse.

SECOND *trimester checklist* (weeks 14 to 28)

- Purchase maternity clothing.** By the end of the second trimester, your baby will be almost four times as big as it was at the end of the first trimester! Check in with friends who have had kids, email groups, and social networking sites for secondhand options.
- Decide whether you'll find out the sex of your baby.** If you want to know the sex of your baby, good news! You should be able to find out during your second trimester ultrasound, which usually happens at around 20 weeks.
- Learn about second-trimester prenatal visits and tests.** During the second trimester you will typically see your health care provider once every four weeks. During your regular visits, you will be offered some prenatal tests and will be able to see your baby in an ultrasound! Make sure to be prepared, ask questions, and know your options.
- Moisturize your belly.** A moisturizing lotion can help reduce the itchiness that some women feel as their belly continues to grow. A moisturizer with vitamin E may prevent or reduce stretch marks, too.
- Budget.** Now is a good time to start thinking about how much extra money you'll need to find in your budget. The financial planner on page 11 can help you start working out your budget.
- Look into childbirth classes.** If you haven't done so already, consider taking childbirth classes. They are offered at hospitals, doctors' offices, and other community venues.



THIRD *trimester checklist* (weeks 28 to 40)

- Tour your hospital or birth center.** Getting familiar with your surroundings ahead of time will make labor and delivery feel less intimidating. Find out what forms you can fill out in advance, so you don't have to deal with paperwork when you're in labor.
- Make a plan for when labor starts.** Your doctor or midwife should give you a clear set of guidelines for when to call and when to head to the hospital or birth center. Use the worksheet on page 12 to make a plan in advance of the big day.
- Create a budget.** Now is a good time to check in on your budget from the second trimester. Go back to the financial planner on page 11 and update it as needed.
- Set up a safe place for your baby to sleep.** See page 18 for important guidelines to reduce your baby's risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).
- Choose a doctor for your baby.** Make sure the pediatrician you choose accepts your health insurance, is in a convenient location, and keeps hours that work with your schedule. If you're not sure who to choose, many pediatricians offer to interview with new parents.
- Assemble your baby gear.** Use the checklist on page 10 to make sure you have the necessities covered, and turn to pages 13–14 to make sure you're packed and ready to go at short notice.
- Wash your baby's clothing and bedding.** Newborns have very delicate skin, and fabrics in new items can contain irritants. Choose a gentle detergent designed especially for new babies.
- Prepare for breastfeeding.** Read, research, and get organized! To feel prepared for some of the challenges you might face while breastfeeding, read as much as you can and talk to friends who have breastfed. If you'd like help getting started, find out if your hospital or birth center has a lactation consultant on staff, and arrange to see her within the first 24 hours. Have some helpful items on hand such as supportive nursing bras, nursing pads, 100% purified lanolin for sore nipples, and frozen peas or gel packs to ease any soreness.



My plan for when labor starts

Once labor starts, it's important to know what to do. Your doctor or midwife will give you a clear set of guidelines for when to call and when to head to the hospital or birth center.

Use this worksheet to plan ahead. It's a good idea to talk to your health care provider and any friends or relatives who have recently had a baby to make sure you have the essentials covered.

When Labor Begins, Call:

Obstetrician or Midwife Name: _____
 Phone: _____

Ride to the Hospital Name: _____
 Phone: _____

Secondary Contact Name: _____
 Phone: _____

Make plans ahead of time for a caregiver to look after children and pets while you are at the hospital.

Caregiver Name: _____
 Phone: _____

Get Ready to Go:

Start timing your contractions. See page 16 to log your contractions.

Know what you're bringing. Get your prepacked hospital bag, ID, and health care information together and ready to go.

Know where you are going. Know how you will get to the hospital or birth center. It's helpful to know specifics like the route you'll take, where to park, and which entrance to use.

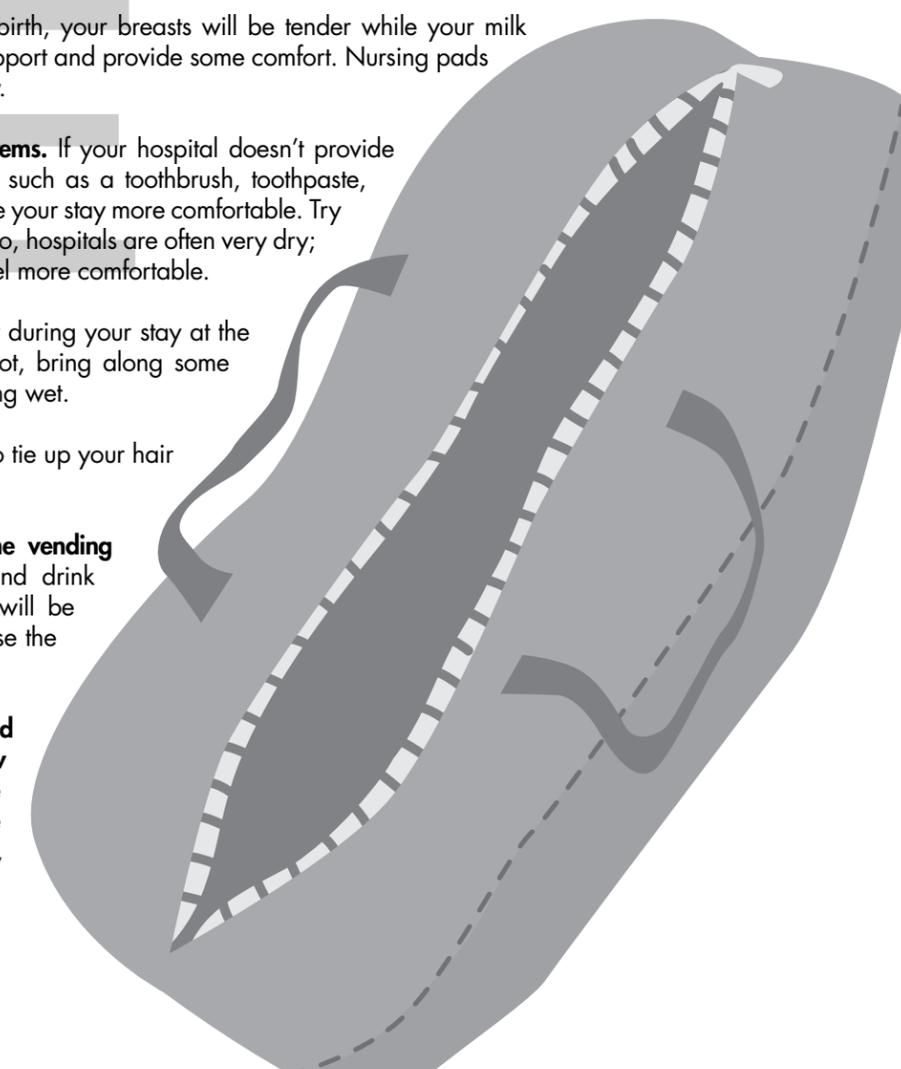
Hospital or Birth Center Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____

Notes: _____

My hospital bag

The items you will need may vary. Here are a few suggestions for what to put in your hospital bag.

- Your ID and health insurance card.** You will need these in order to be admitted into the hospital.
- Hospital forms, your birth plan, and phone numbers of close friends and family.** Bring any forms you've filled out ahead of time, your birth preferences written down in a birth plan, and a list of people you'd like to call after delivery.
- Eyeglasses.** You may not want, or be allowed, to wear your contact lenses during labor and birth.
- A few pairs of underpants and warm socks.** If your room is chilly, you may want socks to wear during labor. Bring a pair of nonskid socks to walk around the hospital, too. The hospital may provide underwear, but many women prefer to bring their own. Make sure to bring underwear that is extra roomy and comfortable, and that you don't mind getting soiled.
- A warm robe, sweatshirt, or sweater.** The hospital will provide a gown, but you may be more comfortable in your own. A short-sleeved robe is best so your blood pressure can be taken more easily.
- Maternity bras and nursing pads.** After birth, your breasts will be tender while your milk comes in. A nursing bra can help with support and provide some comfort. Nursing pads will add extra leak protection if necessary.
- Toiletries, lip balm, and other personal items.** If your hospital doesn't provide them (find out ahead of time), essentials such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, face wash, and lotion can make your stay more comfortable. Try buying travel sizes for easy portability. Also, hospitals are often very dry; having lip balm on hand can help you feel more comfortable.
- Sandals.** You may want to take a shower during your stay at the hospital. If you don't want to be barefoot, bring along some comfortable sandals you don't mind getting wet.
- A headband or hair ties.** You may want to tie up your hair during labor. Bring a few just in case.
- Nonperishable snacks or change for the vending machine.** Some hospitals allow food and drink while in labor, but many do not. You will be hungry after delivery; be prepared in case the hospital cafeteria is closed.
- Cell phone and charger, or a prepaid calling card if your hospital doesn't allow cell phones.** Make sure to have the phone numbers of friends and family you'd like to contact after birth. Bring your charger, too!



My hospital bag (continued)

- A camera.** Having a baby is a very special experience. Check the hospital policy for photography equipment, and if allowed, bring a camera to capture it!
- Going-home clothes.** You will still have your bump for a few weeks, so make sure you bring clothes that are comfortable and roomy.
- Any items that might help you relax.** A book, magazine, or newspaper, your own pillow, or your favorite music could make your hospital stay more comfortable.

Other:

BRING FOR BABY

Make sure to bring an infant car seat (install before labor begins), a coming-home outfit, and warm blankets (especially in cold weather).

My birth plan

A birth plan is a document that outlines your wishes for labor and delivery. It's hard to know or control exactly what will happen, but thinking it through and creating a list of preferences will at least make your wishes known.

Use this worksheet as a starting point to consider your birth plan, and talk over your options with your doctor or midwife.

Who would you like with you during labor and delivery?

What sort of pain relief do you prefer?

How would you prefer to be positioned during delivery?

Do you want to hold baby immediately after delivery, or once wiped clean and swaddled?

How soon after delivery would you like to breastfeed (if at all)?

Who would you like to visit you in hospital, and when?

Do you want your baby to spend the first night in the hospital nursery, or rooming-in with you?

Other:

NEWBORN *care*

SLEEPING

A newborn infant sleeps up to 16 or 17 hours a day in the first few weeks at home. To help your baby fall asleep, try nursing, rocking, or holding her to your chest until she falls asleep.

It's important to create a safe sleep environment for your baby. Follow these guidelines to reduce the risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) and prevent suffocation:

- Place baby on his back in a crib with a firm, tight-fitting crib mattress.
- Do not put pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, pillow-like bumper pads, or pillow-like stuffed toys in the crib.
- Consider using a sleeper instead of a blanket.
- Use only a fitted bottom sheet specifically made for your crib size.

BATHING

Newborns should have sponge baths until the umbilical stump falls off. Keeping it dry will help it fall off faster (usually within two weeks). Your newborn will be too little to take a bath in the bathtub, so you'll need to get a small tub that is made for new babies. Use soap made especially for newborn babies, and use a baby towel with a hood so your baby does not lose heat from her wet head.

DIAPERING

Expect to change your baby about 10 times a day. Contact your pediatrician if after the first few days your baby does not have at least six wet diapers daily, as he may not be getting enough fluid.

DOCTOR *VISITS*

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests that babies receive a checkup at birth, 3 to 5 days after birth, and at 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, and 12 months. During these visits, your baby's pediatrician will perform a physical exam, record measurements, and administer immunizations. If you are ever worried about your baby's health, don't wait for the next scheduled checkup—call your health care provider right away.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Visit your WIC local agency. The WIC federal assistance program aids women, infants, and children up to five years of age. To see if you are eligible for WIC benefits, visit your local agency or check the website of your state's health services department.

Join a birthing class. If you haven't done so already, consider taking a childbirth class. Classes are available at hospitals, doctors' offices, and other community venues, and can provide you with information on pregnancy, birth and early postpartum care; different positions for labor and delivery; massage, breathing, and relaxation techniques; medication interventions to manage pain; and the role of your support person.

HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR EXPECTING MOMS

Office on Women's Health
www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding

National WIC Association
www.nwica.org

American Red Cross (for Infant CPR certification)
www.redcross.org

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