

Perinatal Wellness Guidelines

Routine recommendations for a healthy pregnancy



First Prenatal Visit

Your health care provider* will evaluate your personal health and family history to plan the best care for you and your new baby. The first visit is usually the longest, so be prepared. You may be asked about:

- The date of your last menstrual period to help predict when your baby will be born
- Health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure or sexually transmitted disease
- Past pregnancies and any complications
- Previous hospital admissions
- Current medicines, allergies to medicines and foods
- Vaccination history
- Whether you drink alcohol, use tobacco, or recreational drugs
- Your diet and eating habits and how much you exercise
- Stress in your life
- How safe you feel in your current living arrangements
- Health history of the baby's father and your family history

Your health care provider will also examine you, do some tests and offer advice. He or she may:

- Check your height, weight and blood pressure
- Perform a physical exam, including a pelvic exam
- Take a urine and blood sample for analysis
- Prescribe prenatal vitamins
- Give recommended vaccinations, including but not limited to Tdap and influenza
- Give recommended screening for hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection
- Provide education about what to expect during your pregnancy

Before Pregnancy

It is important to make healthy choices. Keep an ideal weight and a healthy lifestyle. Visit your health care provider for a checkup before becoming pregnant.



Normally, you will see your health care provider every four weeks for the first 28 weeks of pregnancy, then every two weeks until 36 weeks of pregnancy and then weekly until your baby is born. Talk with your health care provider and bring a list of questions to every visit.

Later Prenatal Visits

Follow-up visits usually take less time. Your health care provider may also:

- Check your blood pressure
- Check your hands, feet and face for swelling
- Listen to the baby's heartbeat (beginning as early as week nine)
- Perform an ultrasound (usually at weeks 18 to 20)
- Measure the size of your uterus
- Ask about the baby's movement

After Giving Birth

You should schedule a visit with your obstetrician or other care provider within the first three weeks after giving birth. A comprehensive visit should be done no later than 12 weeks after birth. Your care provider:

- Will do an examination
- May do follow-up testing, if needed
- May give vaccinations, as needed
- May ask about breastfeeding

After giving birth, you may also be asked if you are feeling low, have lost interest in usual activities, have difficulty caring for your baby or have difficulty concentrating, focusing or making decisions.

Depending on your health and the health of your unborn baby, your health care provider may wish to see you more often and do additional testing.

The recommendations are based on information from The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. The recommendations are not intended as medical advice nor meant to be a substitute for the individual medical judgment of a health care provider. Please check with your health care provider for individualized advice on the recommendations provided.

Source: Guidelines for Perinatal Care, Seventh Edition, American Academy of Pediatrics and The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists