



Perinatal Wellness Guidelines

Routine recommendations for a healthy pregnancy

Before Pregnancy

It is important to make healthy choices.

Maintain an ideal weight and a healthy lifestyle. Visit your doctor for a checkup before becoming pregnant.



First Prenatal Visit

Your doctor will evaluate your personal health and family history. This helps your doctor 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 and vaccination history
- Allergies to medicines, foods, etc.
- 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
- Family history

Your doctor will also examine you, do some tests and offer advice. The doctor may:

- Check your height, weight and blood pressure
- Perform a physical exam, including a pelvic exam
- Take a urine sample for analysis
- Take blood to test for anemia and certain infections
- Prescribe prenatal vitamins
- Give recommended vaccinations, including but not limited to Tdap and influenza
- Provide education about what to expect during your pregnancy

Later Prenatal Visits

Follow-up visits usually take less time. Your doctor may also:

- 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

Typically, you will see your doctor 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 doctor and bring a list of questions to every visit.



After Giving Birth

If you have had a C-section, two followup visits may be scheduled at two and six weeks. It is important to follow up with your doctor about six weeks after the delivery.

Your doctor:

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

The doctor may also ask if you are feeling low, have lost interest in usual activities, have difficulty caring for your baby and/or have difficulty concentrating or making decisions.

Depending on your health and the health of your unborn baby, your doctor 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 doctor or other health care professional. Please check with your doctor 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