



PREGNANCY GUIDE

WELCOME!

Thank you for selecting Truesdale Obstetrics and Gynecology as your provider during your pregnancy. We look forward to caring for you and your baby during this exciting time. Our goal is to provide you and your baby with excellent medical care in a supportive environment.

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OFFICE VISITS

Prenatal visits are important for your health and your baby's health.

Please call us if you cannot make your scheduled office visit.

The initial visit with your provider will involve a complete physical exam, including a pap smear (if needed) and tests for sexually transmitted infections. In addition, your provider will review your medical history. You will have the opportunity to address any concerns; it is helpful to write your questions down before your appointment. Subsequent visits do not include a pelvic exam unless the need arises.

At each visit, the medical assistant will check your weight and blood pressure. If you are over 10 weeks pregnant, we will also check the heart rate of your baby. We ask for a urine sample to evaluate for protein and sugar. Specimen containers are provided for this purpose.

Office visits are generally monthly until 28 weeks and then every 2 weeks until 36 weeks. During the last month of pregnancy, visits are once a week. Visits may be more frequent if necessary. Cervical exams to see if your cervix is dilated are usually done at 37 weeks or earlier with signs of labor.

TESTS DURING PREGNANCY

At your orientation visit, you will be given a laboratory slip for initial blood and urine tests. We screen all patients for diabetes. This is a blood test that is done one hour after drinking a sugary drink provided by the laboratory. You are not able to eat or drink while you are doing this test.

You will be offered a test for Down syndrome and spina bifida during your pregnancy. This test is optional. Please read the handout provided to decide if this test is right for you.

Another set of blood and urine tests will be collected at approximately 26-28 weeks, including a second diabetes screening test.

Between 35-37 weeks, we will test for group B streptococcus (GBS) bacteria, a common bacteria that some women naturally carry on their bodies, but can cause severe infections in newborns. If your test is positive, you will be given intravenous antibiotics while you are in labor.

Ultrasounds will be ordered as medically necessary by your provider. All patients have at least one ultrasound during their pregnancy. We are unable to order ultrasounds for the sole purpose of determining the sex of your baby.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

Please contact the childbirth education office **(508) 679-7308** before 18 weeks if you are interested in classes. If you are planning to have a child present at your delivery, you will have to meet with the childbirth educator for orientation. If you are not planning on taking classes, you may arrange a tour of the Family Centered Unit at Charlton Memorial Hospital.

PREGNANCY MASSAGE

Muscle soreness and back pain are common complaints as the body adapts to pregnancy. To help ease the pain, we are pleased to offer massage services at our office. The cost is \$75 for 50 minutes with an experienced massage therapist specializing in pregnancy. Unfortunately, this service is not covered by insurance. To schedule an appointment, please call 508-235-6588.

OUR PROVIDERS

Erron Plosker, MD, FACOG

Dr. Plosker received his undergraduate education and medical degree from the University of Manitoba in Canada. He did his internship at Los Angeles County University of Southern California Medical Center. He completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in West Hollywood, California. He practiced obstetrics and gynecology for 4 years in South Lake Tahoe, California and has been practicing at the Truesdale Clinic in Fall River since 1983.

Margaret Lee, MD, FACOG

Dr. Lee received her B.A. in biology *magna cum laude* with highest honors at Williams College. She received her medical degree at University of Massachusetts where she was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha, the national medical honor society. She remained at University of Massachusetts where she completed her residency in obstetrics and gynecology. She is proficient in Spanish and conversational in Mandarin Chinese. She has been practicing at the Truesdale Clinic in Fall River since 2001.

Susan Braz-Martin, MD, FACOG

Dr. Braz-Martin received her B.A. in chemistry *magna cum laude* from Wellesley College. She was elected to Phi Beta Kappa honor society and Sigma Xi research society. She completed her medical degree and her residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Massachusetts. She is proficient in Spanish. She is a native of Westport. Outside of the office, Dr. Braz-Martin enjoys time with her husband and daughters. She has been at the Truesdale Clinic since 2002.

Kenneth Barron, MD

Dr. Barron grew up in Concord, Massachusetts before attending the University of Virginia as an Echols Scholar. He graduated with honors in 2000 as a member of Phi Beta Kappa honors society. He then received his medical degree from the University of Massachusetts in Worcester, where he remained for a residency in obstetrics and gynecology. He is proficient in Spanish and joined Truesdale Ob/Gyn in 2009.

COVERAGE GROUP

During office hours, we make every effort to deliver our own patients. We hope you have the opportunity to meet all of the providers in our office during your pregnancy, in the event your provider cannot be there.

We cover with several other doctors for nights and weekends. If you call when Truesdale Ob/Gyn providers are not working, you will be cared for by another member of our coverage group.

Gyn/Ob Associates

Dr. Moustafa Ali, MD

Dr. G. Uma Harinarayanan, DO

Dr. Cecilia Yu, MD

Dr. Emily Rogerson, DO

Southcoast Woman's Care

Dr. Michelle Hughes, MD

CHARLTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Please go to Charlton Memorial Hospital for any acute medical issues during pregnancy. Saint Anne's Hospital does not provide obstetrical care, and our providers do not see patients there. If you need medical attention when our office is closed, please make every effort to contact the on-call doctor before going to the hospital. Call **(508) 679-3131** to speak with the operator who will contact the appropriate doctor. If you do not receive a call in a reasonable amount of time, and you feel that you need immediate medical attention, please go to Charlton Memorial Hospital.

COMMON PREGNANCY DISCOMFORTS AND MANAGEMENT

Morning Sickness:

Eat small snacks every two to three hours so that your stomach is never empty. Ginger, peppermint and acupressure wristbands may help.

Leg Cramps:

Increasing calcium (milk, yogurt, cheese), potassium (bananas, beets), and gentle stretching of your legs before bedtime may help.

Braxton Hicks Contractions:

These are normal and are not usually a sign of pre-term labor. They can range from tightening of your stomach to strong cramps. They are likely to go away or space out if you rest. True labor does not stop. If you get more than 4 contractions in an hour, PLEASE call.

Round Ligament Pain:

A sharp pain or pulling sensation on either side of the lower abdomen can occur with movement. Though sharp, the pain goes away quickly and is normal as the uterus grows. Call if the pain does not go away.

Pubic Bone Pain:

Pregnancy hormones loosen the joints of the pelvis, including the connection between the sides of the pubic bone at the bottom of the abdomen. This allows the pelvis to be

more flexible during labor as the baby moves downward. This may also cause soreness and aching that worsens with movement. Try a warm bath or a heating pad for relief.

Lower Back Pain:

Massage, warm baths and compresses, yoga and pelvic rocking may help. Your back must adjust during pregnancy to help you balance as your belly grows. This often leads to muscle pain.

Swollen Feet and Ankles:

Decrease salt, elevate your feet above the level of your heart, wear comfortable shoes and try full length support hose. Please call us if you have swelling that comes on quickly with sudden headaches or blurred vision.

Dehydration:

Your blood volume will increase by about 50% and your body is busy replacing the amniotic fluid around your baby. You need to drink about 2 quarts a day of water!

Urinary Tract Infections:

These occur more frequently during pregnancy. Pregnancy changes the shape of the urinary tract making you more vulnerable to infections. They can be prevented by frequent urination, increasing fluids, wiping from front to back, and urinating after intercourse.

Nasal Problems and Nose Bleeds:

These are common due to an increase in blood flow, increased production of mucus and hormonal influences. A humidifier in your bedroom may be helpful.

YOUR BABY

MONTH 1

(*Pregnancy Week 1-4/ Gestation Week 1-2)

Your estimated date of delivery is defined as 40 weeks from the first day of your last menstrual period. As fertilization usually occurs 2 weeks after the last period, this actually adds two weeks to the pregnancy.

- Your baby is smaller than the size of a grain of rice.
- Weighs less than 1 ounce.
- By the end of the first month, the brain, nervous system, and arms/legs are starting to form.



MONTH 2

- Your baby is smaller than a grape.
- About 1 inch long, and still less than 1 ounce.
- The major organs (heart, lungs) are fully formed.
- The ankles, ears and wrists are forming.



MONTH 3

- Your baby is about 4 inches long and a little more than 1 ounce.
- The teeth are developing.
- You can hear the heartbeat for the first time.



MONTH 4

- Your baby is about 6-7 inches long and weighs about 5 ounces.
- Eyelashes and eyebrows are formed.
- Your baby kicks, moves and swallows.



MONTH 5

- Your baby is about 10 inches long and weighs $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 lb.
- Sleeps and wakes up.
- Has fingernails.
- Begins to suck his/her thumb.



MONTH 6

- Your baby is about 12 inches long and weighs 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
- Skin is red and wrinkled and covered with fine, soft hair.
- Eyes are almost completely formed.
- Eyes will start opening and closing.



MONTH 7

- Your baby is about 15 inches long and weighs about 3 lbs.
- Kicks, stretches, sucks his/her thumb.
- Your baby can sense light and responds to sound.



MONTH 8

- Your baby is about 18 inches long and weighs about 5 lbs.
- The brain is growing very fast.
- Most organs are working well (but the lungs are still not ready).
- He/she may begin to hiccup.



MONTH 9

- Your baby is about 19-21 inches long and weighs between 6-9 lbs.
- The lungs are mature now.
- Your baby will gain about $\frac{1}{2}$ pound per week during this last month.



NUTRITION AND DIET

During pregnancy a balanced diet is very important. In addition to a diet high in fruits and vegetables, healthy eating means avoiding harmful foods and substances. This includes alcohol (beer, wine, or mixed drinks) and illegal drugs, which may cause birth defects and/or developmental problems for your baby. Smoking cigarettes or marijuana is also harmful to your baby. Talk to your doctor if you would like to quit.

Pregnant women need extra iron and folic acid. A prenatal vitamin pill containing these two nutrients plus other vitamins and minerals is recommended.

Fish is a good source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids. However, pregnant women should not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel, or tilefish because they contain high levels of mercury that can be harmful to the developing fetus.

Tuna is moderately high in mercury. We recommend no more than 12 ounces (two meals) of tuna a week.

Listeriosis is an illness caused by *Listeria* bacteria that can occur in unpasteurized milk and soft cheese as well as undercooked or uncooked meats, poultry, and shellfish. Although rare, infection can cause miscarriage or stillbirth.

To prevent listeriosis, wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them. While you are pregnant, do not eat:

- Unpasteurized milk or soft cheeses (such as Brie, Camembert, Roquefort, Feta, Gorgonzola, Queso Blanco and Fresco)
- Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, shellfish
- Prepared meats, such as hot dogs or deli meats, unless they are reheated until steaming hot
- Refrigerated smoked seafood such as salmon or meat spreads such as pâté
- Always be sure to wash your hands and any utensils, countertops, or cutting boards that have been in contact with uncooked meats.

During pregnancy, some women feel strong urges to eat non-food items such as clay, ice, or cornstarch. This is called pica. Pica can be harmful to your pregnancy. Talk with your doctor if you have any of these urges.

WEIGHT GAIN

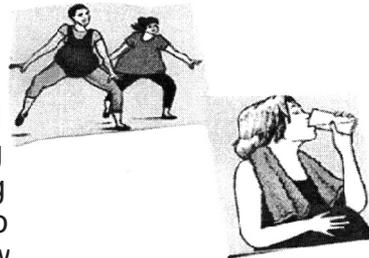
Pregnancy is not an excuse to eat for two! During pregnancy, you only need to eat 100-300 more calories per day than you did before you were pregnant.

How much weight you should gain during pregnancy depends on your weight before pregnancy. If you are overweight, you should gain less, but some weight gain is normal. If you are underweight, you should gain more. Talk with your doctor about the amount of weight you can expect to gain. This may vary if you are pregnant with more than one baby.

EXERCISE

Exercising while pregnant can help you feel better, give you more strength for labor, and speed your recovery after delivery. Your baby may even be healthier.

You can exercise every day if you wish, including walking, swimming, cycling and aerobics. Running and strength training are also okay. We do not recommend snow skiing or contact sports.



- Before beginning an exercise program, talk with your doctor.
- Remember to warm up slowly.
- Be aware that your balance will not be as good as normal.
- Avoid exercising on your back after the first three months.
- Wear cool clothing and do not exercise in the heat.
- If you lose your breath or get tired, slow down.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Stop and call us if you have any problems that do not resolve quickly.

Stretching Exercises (*from Easing Back Pain during Pregnancy; American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology*)



Forward Bends: Bend forward slowly, keeping your upper back straight, until you feel the muscle stretch along your upper thigh. Repeat 10 times.



Trunk Twists: Sit on the floor with legs crossed. Hold left foot with left hand using your right hand for support. Switch hands and repeat on the left. Repeat on both sides 5–10 times.



Leg Lifts: Kneel on hands and knees, with your weight distributed evenly and your arms straight. Lift your left knee and bring it toward your elbow, then straighten it out slowly. Repeat on both sides 10 times.

Sitting Forward Bends: Sit in a chair in a comfortable position. Keep your arms relaxed. Bend forward slowly. Stop bending if you feel any discomfort on your abdomen. Hold for 5 seconds, then sit up slowly without arching your back. Repeat 5 times.



Backward Stretch: Kneel on hands and knees, with knees 10 inches apart and arms straight (hands under your shoulders). Curl backward slowly, tucking your head toward your knees and keeping your arms extended. Hold for 5 seconds, then return to all fours slowly. Repeat 5 times.



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO NEVER IGNORE

- Severe or persistent abdominal or pelvic pain
- Menstrual cramping that is not resolved with hydration and rest
- Vaginal bleeding that is similar to a period. While spotting is generally not serious, you should contact your provider if this is persistent
- Leaking of watery fluid from vagina
- Pelvic pressure, back pain or cramping before 37 weeks
- Painful urination or little urination
- Severe persistent vomiting or diarrhea that lasts more than 24 hours
- Persistent fever of more than 101°F that is not resolving with Tylenol (acetaminophen)
- Persistent visual disturbances: black or white spots, seeing stars, blurriness, or loss of vision
- Severe head pain not resolved with Tylenol (acetaminophen)
- Swelling that is not improving while resting with your feet raised up
- Persistent severe leg or calf pain
- Decrease in fetal movement
- Trauma to the abdomen
- Fainting

Avoid very hot temperatures such as hot tubs and tanning booths.

If your baby's movements have decreased or you have not felt the baby move in 1-2 hours, try eating and drinking. If your baby does not respond, you should call us.

We will ask you to do **Fetal Kick Counts**. This is counting how many times your baby moves in 1 hour. If the baby moves less than 6 times in 1 hour, you should call us. For some babies less frequent movement can be normal. Remember, fluids are very important ... you need at least 8-10 large glasses of water, juice or milk everyday! Watch what fluids you drink if you are diabetic.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Which over the counter medications are safe during pregnancy?

Tylenol, Robitussin, saline nasal spray, regular strength Sudafed and Benadryl are safe in pregnancy. **Do not take** aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) or naproxen (Aleve).

What should I do if I have a sore throat?

Try gargling with warm salty water, increasing fluids and rest. You may also try Tylenol and any over-the-counter throat lozenges.

What may I use for hemorrhoids?

You can use Preparation H, Tucks, Anusol, or Dermaplast as needed.

What should I take for heartburn?

First try Tums or Mylanta. Avoid spicy and greasy foods. Talk with your provider if symptoms persist.

What should I do if I am constipated?

Increasing non-caffeinated fluids and fiber (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dried fruit, prunes) can help. Avoid constipating foods (cheese, bananas, rice and applesauce). If dietary measures do not help, you may add fiber supplements such as metamucil or fibercon. You may also try colace stool softener up to twice a day, milk of magnesia or sennakot.

What can the dentist do/use when I am pregnant?

Almost all dental work is safe in pregnancy. If you need an x-ray, tell the dentist and technician that you are pregnant and make sure they cover your abdomen with lead shields. If dental work is necessary, the dentist may use xylocaine without epinephrine for anesthesia. Penicillins and erythromycin are safe antibiotics in pregnancy. Most pain medications are safe in pregnancy with the exception of Motrin. If the dentist has questions, please have them call our office.

What foods should I avoid in pregnancy?

Certain fish containing higher levels of mercury (tuna) should be limited to two servings per week. *Other fish should be avoided (see page 12).* Caffeine should be limited to one serving per day. Soft cheese (unpasteurized) should be avoided. Raw fish and deli meats should be avoided also.

Can I dye my hair?

There is no data that associates hair dye with birth defects. Your hair may not respond in the same way when treated with chemicals.

Can I exercise?

We encourage exercise in pregnancy. Make sure you drink plenty of water and stop if you get lightheaded or uncomfortable. Be aware that you are at increased risk of joint injury because of the hormonal effects of pregnancy on your ligaments.

Is it safe to have sex?

Sex is safe in most pregnancies. Your provider will tell you if you should avoid sex for any reason.

**Please don't hesitate to ask if
you have any other questions
about how to have a safe &
healthy pregnancy!**

WELCOME!

Notes