

# PRENATAL CARE

*We* feel it is important for our patients to have a general understanding of what to expect with regard to their prenatal care. The outline shown below is a schedule of routine visits. Actual appointments will be modified to meet individual needs.

Your estimated day of confinement (EDC) or "due date" is calculated as 40 weeks from the first day of your last menstrual period or 38 weeks from the time of conception. It is important to remember that delivery is expected to occur any time between three weeks before and two weeks after the EDC. Generally, each patient is seen monthly until 32 weeks of gestation and then more frequently until delivery. Each OB visit will include weight, blood pressure, urinalysis, and fetal assessment.

## INITIAL EXAM (8 WEEKS):

*(Please allow approximately 2 hours for this office visit.)*

**Lab Work** - Blood type, antibody screen, hematocrit, rubella screen, syphilis screen, hepatitis screen, urine screen, Pap smear, HIV screen.

**Counselling** - Prenatal Care, estimated time of delivery, nutrition, exercise, toxoplasmosis counselling, drugs / environmental hazards, offer HIV testing, genetic counselling, ultrasound counselling, anesthesia, breast / bottle feeding, circumcision, post-partum birth control, pediatrician, travel and hospital readmission certification.

**Ultrasound** - You may bring a DVD+RW if you wish.

## 12 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 16 WEEKS:

**Lab Work** - MMST<sup>DT</sup> (Quad Screen), if desired.

## 20 WEEKS:

**OB Ultrasound** - You may bring a DVD+RW if you wish. Please allow 45 minutes for this visit.

## 24 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 28 WEEKS:

**Lab Work** - Diabetes screen, hematocrit, antibody screen and Rhogam if indicated.

Please allow approximately 1 hour for this office visit. Avoid sweets before this appointment.

## 32 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 34 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 36 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination / Group B Strep Culture

## 37 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 38 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination.

## 39 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination / cervical exam

## 40 WEEKS:

Routine obstetrical examination / cervical exam, non-stress test (NST), ultrasound

SPARKS&FAVOR, P.C.

# Prenatal Care



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WOMEN'S MEDICAL PLAZA, SUITE 700 • 2006 BROOKWOOD MEDICAL CENTER DRIVE • BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35209

# OVERVIEW

The following is a brief overview of the basic information we would like all of our prenatal patients to understand. While these issues will be discussed in more detail during your prenatal visits, we feel that a general understanding is important early in your care.

## PRENATAL CARE

1. Each OB visit will consist of weight, blood pressure, urinalysis, and fetal assessments.
2. One of our physicians is available at all times. Some of your prenatal visits will be scheduled with your primary physician's partners so that all physicians can become familiar with you.
3. We encourage patients to contact Brookwood Hospital early in their pregnancy to schedule prenatal classes and tours.
4. Family members may come to OB visits, watch ultrasounds and attend deliveries. We recommend that you have one person present at any given time during active labor and at the delivery.
5. Our office telephone number is a 24-hour number.

## NUTRITION

1. Plan to gain approximately 25-35 pounds during your pregnancy, most of which will be gained the last half of your pregnancy.
2. Excess weight gain may lead to increased fetal weight and can be a health hazard.
3. A well balanced diet is highly recommended in pregnancy and will be discussed with you.
4. Although there are no proven harmful effects, we recommend that you avoid caffeine early in pregnancy and limit caffeine throughout your pregnancy.

## EXERCISE

1. Exercise is encouraged during pregnancy. Walking and swimming are best during pregnancy.
2. You should avoid heavy lifting (more than 20 pounds), exercises with potential abdominal trauma or exercises that may cause excessive increase in body temperature.

## TOXOPLASMOSIS

Toxoplasmosis is a protozoan infection harbored in many animals, especially cats. On rare occasions it can be passed from the mother to the unborn baby and cause problems for the infant. You should avoid handling cat litter and eating under cooked meats during your pregnancy.

## DRUGS / ENVIRONMENT

1. Avoid alcohol during pregnancy.
2. Avoid tobacco use during pregnancy. Smoking is harmful to both you and your unborn baby.
3. Avoid drugs and over-the-counter prescriptions unless you have discussed them with your obstetrician.
4. Avoid exposure to radiation and chemicals during pregnancy.

## GROUP B STREP TESTING

We culture for Group B Strep at 36 weeks. At-risk patients are treated with antibiotics in labor.

## SCREENING FOR BIRTH DEFECTS

We recommend that all of our pregnant patients consider the available screening tests (risk assessment tests) to evaluate the risk of your baby having certain congenital disorders including Down's Syndrome, Trisomy 18, open neural tube defect, or an abdominal wall defect. These tests are available beginning at 12 weeks gestation.

Carrier State Screening (i.e. testing for carriers of Cystic Fibrosis, Tay-Sachs or Thalassemia Canavan disease) should be considered as early in the pregnancy as possible. Please tell your physician if you are interested in this screening.

## ULTRASOUND / 4-D ULTRASOUND

We recommend an ultrasound evaluation in all patients at 8 to 10 weeks and again at 18 to 20 weeks gestation. Additional examinations are performed if indicated. You may request an additional 4-D ultrasound session at 28 to 32 weeks when babies are best seen in the 4-D more. Generally, your insurance will not cover this examination unless there is a medical need.

## BREAST-FEEDING

We recommend breast-feeding to all patients. It has been shown to increase the immune response in the infant. Breast-fed infants have fewer feeding problems, infections and allergies.

## CIRCUMCISION

1. Circumcision is an elective, cosmetic procedure.
2. If requested by the parents, circumcision will be performed by the obstetrician usually 24 to 48 hours after delivery.

## CONTRACEPTION

1. Options for contraception after the baby is born will be discussed during your pregnancy.
2. If you are considering sterilization, please discuss this issue with your physician as early as possible.
3. Sterilization by tubal ligation may be performed the day following delivery or on an outpatient basis at a later date.

## TRAVEL

1. We recommend that you limit travel after 36 weeks gestation (i.e. trips longer than two hours).
2. If travel is necessary, consider where you would go for care should an emergency arise, such as premature labor.
3. If prolonged trips are necessary, stop at least every 1<sup>1/2</sup> to 2 hours for short walks.
4. Lap-shoulder belts are recommended when traveling by car.

## PRETERM LABOR

1. We wish to avoid delivery prior to 37 weeks gestation if possible. Please notify us if you notice any warning signs of preterm labor.
2. Warning signs for preterm labor are:
  - Contractions (occasional contractions are normal, but regular contractions should be reported)
  - Abdominal cramping
  - Watery vaginal discharge
  - Persistent low backache

## ANESTHESIA

1. Our goal is for our patients to have a positive childbirth experience and a healthy baby. We encourage you to prepare for your childbirth experience through childbirth classes, personal reading, and asking questions during your prenatal visits. Labor and delivery is an intense experience and preparation is important.
2. Epidural anesthesia is readily available with a board certified anesthesiologist.
3. For those patients who desire an unmedicated childbirth experience, we encourage natural childbirth and will work with you to achieve this goal. Prenatal classes for unmedicated childbirth are available at Brookwood.

## FETAL MOVEMENT

Fetal movement is an indication of fetal well-being. Please notify our office of decreased fetal movements after 26 weeks gestation.

## INFANT CARE

1. We encourage patients to select a pediatrician in advance, by 24 weeks if possible.
2. Please plan for an infant safety seat for your car.



## CALL YOUR DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You have **contractions** - every 5 minutes for 1 hour
- You are **bleeding** vaginally
- You show signs of **ruptured membranes**
- You experience **decreased fetal movement**
- You have **concerns** or **problems related to your pregnancy**

## AFTER HOURS TELEPHONE:

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