

What A Woman Should Know

About the Last Weeks of Pregnancy

Is It Time To Go?

Baby's First Immunity Comes From MOM

When you decide to breastfeed your baby, you will provide immunity for your child against disease. The first milk a baby receives from the breast is a liquid called colostrum which provides protection from many diseases. It also stimulates the baby's digestive system and provides all the fat, protein and fluid the baby will need until mother's milk increases three to five days later. ❧

Watch Out For The Baby Blues

Your baby may do the crying, but it could be you who has the blues. Many mothers experience post-partum blues, a feeling of sadness and even loss as the body adjusts to no longer being pregnant. Lack of sleep, hormonal changes and the sheer demands of a newborn can bring out these feelings. Usually they pass after a few weeks. However, if depression continues – marked by uncontrollable crying, great changes in appetite, or feelings of hopelessness – you should seek help from your OB/GYN or family doctor. ❧

How will I know I'm in labor? When do we go to the hospital? What if we go too soon? These are common worries of moms and dads as delivery day nears. Your doctor will tell you when he or she prefers that you come to the hospital. Here are some guidelines to use:

❧ *True labor contractions usually . . .*

- Start in the back, and are felt low
- Get longer, stronger and closer together
- Get stronger or worse with walking

❧ *False labor contractions usually . . .*

- May be felt high on the belly
- Are regular in strength, length and intervals
- Go away or ease after walking

❧ *Go to the hospital when . . .*

- Your water breaks – it may be a gush or only a trickle
- You have strong regular contractions that are 4-5 minutes apart for an hour or more
- You see a flow of bright red blood

Ask Your Doctor About Group B Strep Screening

Group B strep infections are the most common serious infections for newborn babies.

It is estimated that more than 1 million women carry the Group B strep bacteria without developing an active infection, but can pass that bacteria to their babies. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends that pregnant women be screened for the Group B strep organism between 35 and 37 weeks of pregnancy. Those who test positive should be offered antibiotic therapy at delivery. The baby may be treated with antibiotics immediately after birth as well to prevent infection. By discovering and treating those who test positive for Group B strep, infections that could be threatening to the newborn baby may be prevented. Ask your doctor for more information about Group B strep screening for pregnant women. ❧

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Breastfeeding Beginnings . . .

- Begin breastfeeding as soon after delivery as you and baby can. Healthy full-term babies have a strong sucking reflex at birth.
- The hospital nurses will help you get comfortable with positioning the baby and assuring that he or she is “latched on” and sucking well.
- The first fluid a baby receives is colostrum – the perfect food for a newborn! It is full of protein and fat, and builds immunity from disease. Mother’s milk supply increases a few days later.
- Will it hurt? It should not be painful to breastfeed. Ask your nurse to help you if you are feeling pain when the baby sucks, or after a feeding. If pain occurs after you go home, call your pediatrician or the lactation consultants/specialists at the hospital for help.
- Is the baby getting enough? Mother’s milk supply adjusts to the baby’s demand. Most breastfed babies want to nurse 8 - 12 times a day. Signs that baby is getting enough milk are:
 - 6 - 8 wet cloth diapers or 5 - 7 wet disposable diapers daily
 - 3 - 5 bowel movements daily (yellow in color with a thin, seedy consistency)
 - Weight gain of 4 - 7 ounces per week

If you are still wondering if baby is getting enough, make a call to the lactation consultants at your hospital or your pediatrician for tips on increasing your milk supply. ☞

Back To Sleep For Baby

By the time your baby arrives, you will have spent a lot of time preparing the nursery, and making the baby’s crib as safe and as comfortable as possible. However, there is still one important safety measure you can take – that is placing your baby on his or her back in the crib or bassinet. Babies who sleep on their backs are 30% less likely to be victims of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Avoid using any fluffy blankets or pillows that can bunch up around the baby’s face. And never place your baby in a bean bag chair or on a waterbed. Remember, newborns sleep 12 to 21 hours a day. So while baby is sleeping, new parents can sleep like a baby, too. ☞

Did You Know?

The tendency to get stretch marks is inherited. They are not caused or prevented by the way you treat your skin or how big your baby grows. Your itching skin will be more comfortable if you rub soothing lotion or cream on your abdomen and legs and avoid hot showers or baths. ☞



Prenatal Education
P.O. Box 382304
Germantown, TN 38183-2304