

OB Frequently Asked Questions

This information is not a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The diagnosis or treatment of any disease or condition may be based on personal history, family history, symptoms, a physical examination, laboratory test results, and other information considered important by your doctor. Always talk with your doctor about the meaning of your test results.

How is my due date calculated?

Who is going to deliver me?

Can I work while I'm pregnant?

Can I fly/travel?

Is exercise safe during pregnancy?

Is sex safe during pregnancy?

Can I paint the baby's room or other areas of my home?

Is coloring/highlighting my hair okay? What about manicures and acrylic nails?

Can I use a hot tub?

What over-the-counter medications are safe to take while I'm pregnant?

What is the normal amount of weight gain during a pregnancy?

What should I expect in the first trimester?

What should I expect in the second trimester?

What should I expect in the third trimester?

What is gestational diabetes?

What is the testing for gestational diabetes?

What is Group B Strep (GBS)? What is the testing for GBS?

Testing for birth defects

- Ashkenazi Jewish Screening
- Cystic Fibrosis Carrier Screening
- Tay-Sachs Screening

Where can I find options for different types of prenatal classes?

Is there anything I can do to avoid delay or inconvenience when I am admitted to the hospital during labor?

Under what circumstances do I need to call my doctor or nurse after my baby is born?

What are the signs and symptoms of postpartum depression?

What do I need to know about the health care coverage for my newborn?

How is my due date calculated?

Your due date is 40 weeks from the first day of your last menstrual period. A 37 to 42 week pregnancy is considered "full term." Ultrasound can be very useful in determining an accurate due date, as well.

Who is going to deliver me?

Throughout your prenatal visits, you will rotate through each of our OB doctors, in addition to your primary OB/GYN. This is to ensure that you are comfortable with each of our doctors, as it is difficult to know ahead of time which doctor will be on call when you deliver your baby.

Can I work while I'm pregnant?

Talk to your physician. Usually, working during pregnancy is not a problem and many women are able to work until delivery.

Can I fly/travel?

Please seek advice from your physician prior to making plans to fly or travel during your pregnancy.

Is exercise safe during pregnancy?

Yes. In fact, exercise is safe and should not be avoided. Exercise reduces discomforts such as backache, constipation, fatigue, and bloating, while promoting strength and endurance, which is helpful during labor. Of course, you will need to be more careful with physical activity. The workout should be lowimpact, with a pulse never being over 140. The duration and intensity should be based on a woman's level of fitness. Swimming is the best activity for pregnant women. Walking and stationary biking are also good activities for pregnant women.

Is sex safe during pregnancy?

Yes, as long as there are no problems with the pregnancy.

Can I paint the baby's room or other areas of my home?

Fumes from paint may or may not be harmful to inhale during pregnancy. Water-based paints in well ventilated areas are advised.

Is coloring/highlighting my hair okay? What about manicures and acrylic nails?

If you would like to color or highlight your hair during your pregnancy, talk to your physician first. It is safe to get manicures or acrylic nails, as long as you are in a well-ventilated area.

Can I use a hot tub?

You should avoid hot tubs during pregnancy.

What over-the counter medications are safe to take while I'm pregnant?

Please see the approved medication list for OB patients on the FAQ's page

What is the normal amount of weight gain during a pregnancy?

A woman should gain 25-35 pounds total during pregnancy, more if underweight, less if overweight. She should gain 5-10 pounds in the first half of her pregnancy, then a pound a week thereafter.

What should I expect in the first trimester?

- Routine blood tests such as blood count, blood type, Hepatitis B, HIV, and thyroid test.
- For certain ethnic groups, consider further tests.
 - African American: Sickle Cell screening and Hemoglobin electrophoresis
 - French Canadian descent: Tay-Sachs
 - Eastern European Jewish descent: Tay-Sachs, consider Jewish Eight Screen
 - Mediterranean (Greek, Italian, and Middle Eastern) and Southeast Asian: Thalassemia testing
- Everyone should consider Cystic Fibrosis testing, however, this test is expensive and cannot tell a person they are NOT a carrier with 100% accuracy.
- Women age 35 (some experts say 30) years and over should consider genetic testing with amniocentesis.
- An integrated screen done with ultrasound and blood tests in the first and second trimesters may help detect over 90% of Down Syndrome.
- Most diets and activities in moderation are safe.
- Things that are forbidden during pregnancy: smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages including beer and wine, street drugs, hot tubs, raw meat, lake fish from the Great Lakes, shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and possibly tuna.
- Visits in the first trimester are about every four weeks.
- You should expect to rotate through each of our OB doctors.

What should I expect in the second trimester?

- AFP blood test – This screens for Down Syndrome and Spina Bifida. Note: This is a screening test and if it comes back abnormal (about 5% of women), it simply means follow up testing should be offered. The vast majority of babies will still be normal.
- Ultrasound and an OB appointment will be needed at about 20 weeks.
- Diabetes testing at 24-28 weeks. Women at risk for gestational diabetes are over 35 years old, overweight, have a strong family history of diabetes, previous large baby, or previous gestational diabetes. For more information about testing, see below.
- Visits are still every 4 weeks until early in the third trimester.

What should I expect in the third trimester?

- Monitor blood pressure, watch baby's growth, discuss labor events, and consider prenatal classes.
- For more information about classes, please ask for a Women's Services packet upon your next visit to our office.
- Group B Strep testing between 35-37 weeks.
- Visits to the office every two weeks, then every week in the last month of the pregnancy.

What is gestational diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is a carbohydrate intolerance that begins during pregnancy. There is a possibility that the diabetes may have existed but was not diagnosed before the pregnancy.

Women with gestational diabetes have a higher risk of having a large baby and a difficult delivery.

What is the testing for gestational diabetes?

- One hour Glucose Tolerance Test at 24-28 weeks:
 - This requires you to drink a 50-gram glucose drink. Once the drink is finished, a time is set for one hour. After one hour, your blood is drawn and sent to the lab for testing.
 - If the result is less than 135, it is normal, and no additional test is needed. If the result is greater than 135, the three hour glucose tolerance test is required.
- Three Hour Glucose Tolerance Test
 - This test requires a three-day preparation diet.
 - For three days prior to the test, select at least three choices at EACH meal from the following food groups:
 - Grains and starchy vegetables
(1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta, 1 slice of bread, 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal, ½ cup cooked cereal)
 - Fruit
(1 medium orange, banana or apple, ½ cup canned fruit, ¼ cup dried fruit, ¾ cup of juice)
 - Milk product
(1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1 ½ ounces of natural cheese, 2 ounces of processed cheese)
 - Note: Include at least one candy bar or dessert each day
 - After 10PM the night before the test, do not eat or drink anything except water. On the day of the test, do not eat, drink, or smoke.
 - Testing requires you to get your blood drawn and drink a 100-gram glucose drink. The whole drink must be finished within five minutes of starting. Your blood will be drawn every 60 minutes for the duration of the 3-hour test.

What is Group B Strep (GBS)?

One of the many bacteria that usually do not cause serious illness. GBS is not an STD.

What is the testing for GBS?

Testing takes place between 35 and 37 weeks of pregnancy. At this time, a swab is placed in the vagina and rectum to obtain a sample. If this test is positive, you will be treated with an antibiotic during labor.

Ashkenazi Jewish Screening

Eight disorders that can be carried and detected:

- 1) Bloom Syndrome
- 2) Canavan Disease
- 3) Cystic Fibrosis
- 4) Familial Dysautonomia
- 5) Fanconi Anemia Group C
- 6) Gaucher Disease, Type 1
- 7) Niemann-Pick Disease
- 8) Tay-Sachs Disease

Cystic Fibrosis Carrier Screening

- Cystic Fibrosis is a life-long illness in infants, children, and young adults that causes problems with digestion and breathing.
- Cystic Fibrosis carrier screening:
 - Test is performed on a small sample of your blood, then sent to the laboratory for analysis

Tay-Sachs Screening

- Tay-Sachs is a disease in which harmful amounts of a fatty substance called ganglioside GM2 collect in the nerve cells in the brain.
- Tay-Sachs causes severe mental retardation, blindness, and seizures.
- Tay-Sachs screening:
 - Blood work done in office

Where can I find options for different types of prenatal classes?

Please call Physician Referral Service at (866)-501-3627 or visit www.stjohnprovidence.org to register for any of the following classes:

- Preparation for Childbirth
- Childbirth Refresher
- C/Section Class
- Breastfeeding Preparation
- Baby Care Basics
- Brother and Sister Class
- Prenatal Tours
- Infant Massage

Is there anything I can do to avoid delay or inconvenience when I am admitted to the hospital during labor?

In order to avoid any delay or inconvenience when you are admitted, please register online by filling out a Pre-Registration form at www.stjohn.org

What are the signs and symptoms of postpartum depression?

- Postpartum blues that don't go away after two weeks
- Strong feelings of depression and anger that begin 1-2 months after the birth
- Feelings of sadness, doubt, guilt, and helplessness increase and begin to disrupt normal functioning
- Becoming unable to care for yourself or your baby
- Difficulty handling usual responsibilities at home or on the job
- Not being able to sleep, even when tired, or sleeping most of the time
- Marked changes in appetite
- Loss of interest in things that used to bring pleasure
- Extreme concern and worry about the baby, or lack of interest in the baby
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Fear of being alone in the house with the baby or of harming the baby
- Thoughts of self-harm, including suicide.

What do I need to know about the healthcare coverage for my newborn?

You will have 30 days from the date of birth to add your baby to your health insurance policy. If you are enrolled in an insurance plan through an employer, please contact them within 30 days of your baby's birth to add your newborn to your insurance. If you are enrolled as an individual, you need to contact the member services department of your health plan to report the addition of your newborn. If you do not report the addition of your newborn within 30 days, your baby's medical expenses may not be covered by your health insurance. If you have questions about adding new dependents to your policy, you should call your employer or the member services department of your health plan.