

GIRLFRIENDS GUIDE TO

PREGNANCY



CRITTENDEN COUNTY
Cares

PREGNANCY PROGRAM



www.crittendencountycares.org

Just because your pregnancy is unexpected doesn't mean it has to be a burden. We are here to help.

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1. The Stages of Pregnancy

Pregnancy is typically divided into three trimesters, each with its own unique characteristics and developmental milestones for both the parent and the baby.

First Trimester (Weeks 1-13): This is a critical period for fetal development, as the baby's major organs and body structures are forming. You may experience symptoms like nausea, fatigue, breast tenderness, and frequent urination.

Second Trimester (Weeks 14-26): Often called the "honeymoon period," many of the more uncomfortable early symptoms subside. You may feel an increase in energy and begin to feel the baby's movements, known as "quickening."

Third Trimester (Weeks 27-40): The final stretch! Your baby's bones are fully formed and their organs are preparing for life outside the womb. You may experience new physical symptoms, such as shortness of breath, heartburn, and swelling.

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2. A Healthy Diet and Nutrition

Eating a balanced diet is crucial for both your health and the baby's development.

Key Nutrients: Focus on foods rich in protein, iron, folic acid, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids. Folic acid, in particular, is vital for preventing neural tube defects and should be taken as a supplement before and throughout pregnancy.

Caloric Intake: Caloric needs change throughout pregnancy. While the first trimester typically doesn't require extra calories, you'll need around 340 extra calories per day in the second trimester and about 450 extra calories per day in the third trimester. These should come from nutrient-dense foods.

Foods to Avoid: There are certain foods to avoid to minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses or exposure to harmful substances. These include:

Undercooked or raw meat, poultry, and eggs.

High-mercury fish (e.g., swordfish, shark, king mackerel).

Unpasteurized soft cheeses and milk.

Deli meats and hot dogs unless heated until steaming hot.

Hydration: Drink plenty of water to support increased blood volume and amniotic fluid levels.

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3. Exercise and Physical Activity

Staying active during pregnancy has numerous benefits, including reducing discomfort, improving sleep and mood, and preparing your body for labor.

General Guidelines: Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. This could include brisk walking, swimming, stationary cycling, or prenatal yoga.

Exercises to Avoid: Steer clear of activities that carry a high risk of falling or abdominal injury, such as contact sports, downhill skiing, or scuba diving. Avoid exercises that require you to lie flat on your back after the first trimester.

Listen to Your Body: It's important to pay attention to how you feel. If you feel dizzy, overheated, or experience pain, stop and rest.

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4. Important "Do's" and "Don'ts"

Do take prenatal vitamins. Start them when you are planning to conceive, if possible.

Do attend all your prenatal appointments. These visits are essential for monitoring your health and your baby's development.

Do get recommended vaccines, such as the flu shot and Tdap.

Don't smoke, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs. There is no safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy.

Don't consume more than 200mg of caffeine per day, which is about one 12-ounce cup of coffee.

Don't handle cat feces, as it can cause an infection called toxoplasmosis.

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5. Emotional and Mental Wellness

Pregnancy can bring a wide range of emotions, from excitement to anxiety. A good guide acknowledges this and offers support.

Stress Management: Find healthy ways to cope with stress, such as meditation, gentle walks, or spending time in nature.

Seek Support: Don't hesitate to talk to your healthcare provider if you are feeling anxious or depressed. They can connect you with support groups or mental health professionals.

For additional guidance, many expectant parents find week-by-week pregnancy guides or books like "What to Expect When You're Expecting" to be helpful resources. Remember that this information is for general guidance, and you should always consult with your healthcare provider for personalized advice.

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RESOURCES

East Arkansas Family Health Center recently opened a new location in West Memphis. It is dedicated to providing women's health care for adolescent and adult females in Crittenden County and surrounding areas. Services include:

Annual well-woman exams, including Pap smears and breast exams

Lifestyle support

Referrals for mammograms

HPV and STD screening

Menopause management

Prenatal care and education

Pregnancy testing

Teen pregnancy services

Family planning and contraceptive counseling

Fetal assessment and monitoring, including ultrasounds

Nexplanon removal

Bartholin abscess management

Evaluation and treatment of:

Abnormal Pap smears

Endometriosis

Irregular menstruation

Uterine fibroids

Ovarian cysts

Polycystic ovarian syndrome

Location: 900 N 7th St, West Memphis, AR

Phone: 870-735-3842

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RESOURCES

In Crittenden County, Arkansas
Crittenden County LHU / West Memphis (Arkansas Department of Health): This local health unit provides various services, including pregnancy and parenting resources, and can assist with applications for programs like WIC.

Address: 901 North 7th St, West Memphis, AR 72301

Phone: (870) 735-4334

Baptist Memorial Hospital-Crittenden: This hospital is a part of the larger Baptist Memorial Health Care system and offers maternity services. While its online presence suggests a focus on broader medical services, it's a key local option for labor and delivery.

Address: 2100 N 7th St, West Memphis, AR 72301

Phone: (870) 394-7800

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RESOURCES

In Crittenden County, Arkansas
Mitchell Family Medicine: Located in Marion, this clinic offers women's health services, including gynecological care. It's important to note that while they provide prenatal care, their website states they do not offer obstetrics. You would need to check with them to see what specific prenatal services they offer and if they work with a local hospital for delivery.

Address: Hwy 64 Marion, AR
Phone: 870-739-8670

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