

Birth Preparedness Checklist

Being prepared will help you to feel comfortable and confident for once labor begins.

Remember, your due date is an estimated date and the window to deliver is typically considered to be 36-42 weeks with most babies typically arriving a week around the due date.

36 weeks (4 weeks before Due Date)

Optimal Fetal Positioning: Encourage your baby to be in the best position for birth!

Check out Spinning Babies (spinningbabies.com) and/or Miles Circuit (milesircuit.com) exercises. Want to keep it simple? Pelvic rocking at least once a day for 15-20 minutes.

Practice relaxation and mindfulness: Use any real time situations that cause stress, tension, or discomfort. Focus on using your abdominal breath to let this stress, tension, discomfort go.

Rest: Your body is doing a lot of work growing a baby and labor is like running a marathon! Take the opportunity for short naps.

Hydrate: Make sure to drink plenty of water and intake electrolytes (to help prevent Charlie horses and muscle cramps).

Eat Dates: A recent study shows a pregnant woman that eats 6 dates a day from 36 weeks until delivery were more likely to have intact membranes upon admission to the hospital, go into labor spontaneously, avoid pitocin, and have a shorter first phase of labor.

Pamper: Schedule a date night with your partner and plan some pampering for yourself (hair, nails, movie, massage, etc.).

37 weeks (3 weeks before Due Date)

Get Packing: Pack a bag for labor and a bag for after baby arrives. See what to pack handout for details.

Birth 'Hopes & Dreams': Finalize your birth plan and bring to your next appointment to discuss with your care provider. Remember the birth plan is a flexible tool to communicate your hopes and dreams for birth to your providers and allows them to help you have your best experience.

Car Seat: Make sure the car seat is installed properly. Schedule an appointment to have it inspected (safecar.gov).

Route: Know your route to the hospital and a back up plan in case of traffic or inclement weather.

Nurses Baskets: If planning gifts for the nurses, prepare these ahead of time.

Continue practicing the suggestions from 36 weeks.

38 weeks (2 weeks before Due Date)

Finalize packing: Make sure bags are ready and purchase non-perishable foods to bring for labor and after.

Birth Ball: Practice sitting on the birth ball whenever possible.

Continue practicing the suggestions from 36 weeks.

Leaving for the Hospital or Birthing Center

EAT BEFORE YOU LEAVE: Labor is like running a marathon. Choose foods that are not likely to upset your stomach but will give you long lasting energy.

Bags Packed: Birth and Postpartum bags packed and ready.

Food: Pack non-perishable foods and use a cooler and ice packs for any perishable items. It's a good reminder to pack plenty of food for partners and foods that mom will want after delivery.

Birth Ball

Insurance card, license, phone list

Nurses Baskets

Towels or plastic for car in case of rupture of membranes or vomiting

Phone chargers, power strip, extension cord