



TAMPA BAY MIDWIVES

Your Birth ♥ Your Way



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We welcome you as a client and appreciate the opportunity to provide you with pregnancy services. The information that follows is designed to answer many questions our clients have. We want you to know about our policies and methods of practice. The more you know, the more we can be of service. If you have further questions, please ask.

Appointments: We see all clients on an appointment basis and request that you call in advance so that we can reserve time to see you. We make every effort to honor your appointment time and request that you extend the same courtesy to us. On occasion, emergencies can cause delays and whenever possible, you will be fully informed if your appointment will be affected.

Please contact the office as soon as possible when you realize you may be unable to keep an appointment. If you are more than 15 minutes late for your appointment time, it is likely that we will need to cancel your appointment to avoid delaying others.

For the consideration of others, please do not bring sick children to the office for your appointments. For your own health, please reschedule your appointment if you are sick. If you have questions about your illness, please contact the midwives.

Contacting Us

Remember that you have chosen us to be your primary care provider during your pregnancy and postpartum period. If you are worried or have concerns, we are here to help you. Please call us before going to an Emergency Room. Our phone number is **813-461-3844**.

Reasons to call a midwife at any time of day:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Severe or sudden abdominal pain
- Severe headaches
- Sudden or persistent swelling
- Pain with urination
- Illness with vomiting, diarrhea, or fever for over 24 hours
- Decreased or lack of fetal movement when movement has been normal
- You think your water has broken or is leaking
- You have bloody show or contractions prior to 37 weeks
- You have contractions that are in a consistent 4-1-1 pattern (every 4 minutes, lasting for a minute, happening for at least an hour)

You can call or text us during normal business hours (9am-5pm) for any of the following:

- Your health
- Your nutrition
- Payment and insurance questions
- Scheduling appointments
- Non-urgent questions

If we do not answer, please leave a detailed message and we will return your call as soon as possible. If it is an emergency or you are in labor, please call again after 10 minutes.

Baby Kick Count Chart

During the last month of pregnancy, your baby may start to experience different types of movement. These can include rolls, stretching, kicks, squirming, etc. This may feel like the movements are slowing down, but you should still feel them every few hours. If you notice that the baby is not moving as much as you are used to, perform a Fetal Kick Count.

Pick a time of day that you can be resting, quiet, and have a cold glass of tea, juice, or water. You can also eat a protein rich snack. Look at the clock and write the time in the 'Start Time' box. Begin counting all movements. When you have reached the tenth movement, write the time in the 'End Time' box. **If after 2 hours you have not gotten 10 movements, call us right away.**

Date	Start Time	End Time

Principles of Good Nutrition

The easiest and most effective thing you can do to have a healthy pregnancy, birth, and postpartum recovery, as well as a healthy baby, is to eat well. Keep in mind these three basic principles:

1) Eat regularly and frequently

Try eating 6 small meals to keep your blood sugar even. For your own energy and nausea control, and for the baby's access to nutrients, small, frequent meals are important. Make sure you're eating nutritious foods as snacks between meals.

2) Eat fresh, unprocessed foods

Eating foods that are found in their natural state is always the best for your health. Foods that are packaged with chemicals and preservatives should be avoided as much as possible. These things are okay in moderation, but it is a good idea to eat fresh first.

3) Eat variety

While it is important to eat healthy foods, it is also healthy to eat a variety of things so you are getting a mix of nutrients. Eating the same things over and over does not help your body.

Making good food choices can create a comfortable, healthy, and easier pregnancy, labor, and postpartum. Most common discomforts of pregnancy can be improved with food choices including nausea, fatigue, mood swings, constipation, muscle cramps, and more. Eating well can also help prevent certain conditions like pre-eclampsia, miscarriage, placental abruption, severe infections, neural tube defects, prolonged labor, low birth weight babies, and breastfeeding problems.

Recommended Food Servings

Fruits: Have 2-4 servings daily. Limit fruit drinks with added sugar as real fruit has more vitamins.

Vegetables: Have 3-5 servings daily. Fresh is best, but frozen or canned is okay in moderation. Avoid fried vegetables.

Dairy: Have 4 servings daily. Dairy has good sources of calcium. Limit non-dairy substitutes.

Grains: Have 5-6 servings daily. Opt for whole grain breads and limit processed grains like pastries, white bread, and desserts.

Protein: Have 2-3 servings daily (75-80g). Limit processed meats such as hot dogs, bologna, bacon, etc.

Fish: There are certain types of fish that should be avoided in pregnancy. Some contain high levels of mercury, which can affect brain development.

Highest Mercury (Avoid):

Marlin
Orange roughy
Tilefish
Swordfish
King Mackerel

High Mercury (no more than three 6oz servings/month):

Saltwater Bass
Halibut
Tuna (canned white albacore, ahi, fresh, bluefin)
Bluefish
Sea trout
Lobster (American/Maine)

Lower Mercury (no more than six 6oz servings/month):

Carp
Snapper
Crab (snow, blue, dungeness)
Skate
Tuna (fresh Pacific albacore, canned chunk light)
Mahi
Monkfish
Cod
Herring

Perch (freshwater)

Lowest Mercury (two 6oz servings/week):

Anchovies
Butterfish
Calamari
Caviar
Crab (king)
Pollock
Catfish
Whitefish
Perch
Scallops
Flounder
Tilapia
Haddock
Crawfish
Hake
Sardines
Sole
Salmon
Shrimp
Clams
Sturgeon
Trout

Protein

Protein is an essential nutritional requirement during pregnancy because it provides the amino acids needed for adequate bone and muscle development. Eating enough protein is essential for healthy development of new cells in the placenta and maternal tissues and encourages healthy blood production. A lack of protein in your diet during pregnancy can make you feel weak or light-headed, which can make day to day tasks difficult. It can also lead to pre-eclampsia in later pregnancy. For the developing baby, the effects of a lack of protein in the diet include miscarriage, poor muscle and joint development, brain damage, and a high risk of birth defects.

It is recommended to have 75-80 grams of protein per day at a minimum. This can be acquired through a number of dietary sources such as fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, tofu, soy, beans, legumes, and protein powder or shakes.

Iron

Iron is needed by the body to make hemoglobin, which is the component of red blood cells that carries oxygen to each cell. Iron deficiency leads to feeling tired, shortness of breath, dizziness, headaches, and depression. It is recommended to have 50mg of iron per day and is best absorbed from dietary sources like red meat, leafy green vegetables, nuts and seeds, eggs, and cooking in a cast iron pan.

It is very common in pregnancy to experience anemia, or iron deficiency, especially around 28 weeks of pregnancy. This is caused by an increase in blood volume that naturally occurs. When this happens, we typically recommend starting a chelated iron supplement called Hemaplex. Taking 85mg daily can help raise your iron levels. Iron is more easily absorbed in combination with vitamin C, so taking your supplement with a glass of orange juice is recommended. Calcium can block iron absorption, so avoiding dairy products when taking your supplement can help.

Hydration

It is imperative that you maintain your hydration during pregnancy. If you become dehydrated, your muscles begin to contract. Your most sensitive muscle in pregnancy is your uterus. If you find you are experiencing mild cramping, try drinking 8oz of water and resting.

Optimal hydration will help you avoid headaches and muscle cramps also. It will aid better digestion, prevent urinary issues, increase your circulation, and prevent excessive swelling in later pregnancy.

To ensure you are drinking enough water, aim for 100 oz per day. Another great way to hydrate is to drink coconut water or add Liquid IV packets to your water. Both of these have electrolytes which are important for your body.

Standard Labs in Pregnancy

In pregnancy, there are three standard sets of lab work. These are done at your initial visit, around 24-28 weeks of pregnancy, and at 36 weeks. We can also perform lab work at other appointments if you develop signs or symptoms of any conditions.

Initial Labs:

- Complete Blood Count (to check iron levels and platelets)
- Blood type and Rh antibodies
- Hemoglobin A1C
- HIV
- RPR (syphilis)
- Rubella antibodies
- Hepatitis B Antigen
- Hepatitis C antibodies
- Gonorrhea/Chlamydia
- Vitamin D
- Urine culture
- Urinalysis
- Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (genetic screening, optional)

24-28 Week Labs:

- Complete Blood Count
- Vitamin D
- Glucose challenge test
- HIV (optional)
- RPR (optional)

36 Week Labs:

- Complete Blood Count
- GBS swab
- Gonorrhea/Chlamydia (optional)

Glucose Challenge Testing

Around 24-28 weeks of pregnancy, you will do something called a Glucose Challenge Test (GCT). This test screens for a condition called Gestational Diabetes (GDM), where placental hormones create insulin resistance in the birthing person. This allows more nutrients to go to the baby, leading to fat accumulation in the baby's chest and creating possible birth complications. GDM occurs in 2-10% of all pregnancies.

There are a few options that you can choose for this test: 50 gram glucola, Fresh Test, or finger sticks.

For the glucola and Fresh Test, you will be given the drink at the visit prior to your blood draw. You are not required to fast ahead of time, but should eat your normal meals that day. Avoid any extra sugar such as donuts, flavored coffee, or maple syrup. You will be given directions on when to begin drinking the glucose drink in relation to your appointment time. You have 5 minutes to finish the entirety of the drink. Please note the time when you finish your drink; we will draw your blood exactly an hour later. Your glucose level must not exceed 140 mg/dL or you will be required to do a 3-hour Glucose Tolerance Test (GTT).

If you choose to do finger sticks, you will need to perform these using a glucometer 4 times a day (fasting, 2 hours after breakfast, 2 hours after lunch, and 2 hours after dinner) for a total of 4 weeks. You will also be required to keep a food journal that correlates with each reading so we can assess for any sugar spikes. These logs will be emailed to the midwives each week for review.

The reference ranges for each blood reading are as follows:

Fasting: should not exceed 95 mg/dL

2 hours after meals: should not exceed 120 mg/dL

It is okay to have values that exceed these occasionally as you figure out what foods work best for your body and blood sugar stability. If 20% of the readings are above the limits, you will be diagnosed with GDM.

Glucose Tolerance Test

If you exceed 140 mg/dL for the glucola or Fresh Test, or 20% of your readings are high for the finger sticks, you will be required to do a three hour glucose tolerance test (GTT). You will go to your local Quest lab for this test.

You will need to fast for 8 hours prior to the test. It is best to go in the morning due to this. Once you arrive at the lab, they will draw your blood for a fasting value. You will then drink a 100 gram glucola within 5 minutes, and they will draw your blood 1 hour, 2 hours, and 3 hours after you finish. You are allowed to drink water in between but no food will be permitted. You should bring a book or something to do while you wait.

The ranges for each blood draw:

Fasting: should not exceed 95 mg/dL

1 Hour: should not exceed 180 mg/dL

2 Hour: should not exceed 155 mg/dL

3 Hour: should not exceed 140 mg/dL

Between these four values, if two or more of them are out of range, you will be diagnosed with GDM. We will help you track your blood sugar levels and keep a food journal. You will also consult with Maternal and Fetal Medicine (MFM) and as long as you are able to stay diet and exercise controlled, meaning you do not require any medications to control your blood sugar, you can stay in our care.

Group Beta Strep Testing

Group Beta Strep (GBS) is a bacteria that lives in our digestive tracts. It is transient, meaning that it can travel to other parts of our bodies. Around 36 weeks of pregnancy, you will perform a vaginal swab to see if this bacteria is present in your reproductive tract. While this bacteria is harmless to you, your baby can acquire it while in the birth canal. Not all babies will develop an infection from GBS, but 1-2% of them will. If left untreated, it can lead to respiratory distress, meningitis, sepsis, and in severe cases, death.

We screen for GBS so that we can offer prophylactic IV antibiotics in labor if you are positive. If there are no allergies, ampicillin is the first choice in medication. You will receive 2 grams in an IV with saline over the course of 15-20 minutes. The dose is said to last for 4 hours. Once that time has passed, we will do subsequent 1 gram doses every 4 hours until the baby is born. If you have allergies to ampicillin, we have other medications we can offer.

This course of treatment is not required, but always recommended. We will give you GBS infection signs and symptoms to look for in your baby in the first days and weeks of life to determine if further evaluation is necessary.

Common Discomforts in Pregnancy

The following pages offer you some advice for care and comfort measures for many of the common discomforts that come with being pregnant. Always discuss any concerns you may have with your midwife.

Remember, pregnancy is not an illness and most of the discomforts you may experience are normal and do not need to be treated medically. Please take steps to use the natural comfort measures before medication. However, should your symptoms increase, persist, or start to affect your daily activities and work, please call and discuss them with your midwife for further input and advice.

Nausea/Vomiting

Backache

Constipation

Heartburn

Hemorrhoids

Swelling

Round Ligament Pain

Varicose Veins

Fatigue/Insomnia

Leg Cramps

Emotions

Yeast Infection

Itching

Cold and Flu

Seasonal Allergies

Abdominal/Uterine Discomfort

Urinary Tract Infection

Other Common Discomforts

Nausea/Vomiting

Although some nausea and vomiting is normal in early pregnancy, it is important to appreciate the degree of distress and disruption of daily life that can result. If your vomiting is severe and you cannot keep anything down, including water, call the midwife right away.

Please be reassured that normal pregnancy nausea and vomiting, even with first trimester weight loss, is not associated with poor pregnancy outcomes.

Some natural therapies:

- eat small, frequent meals or snacks such as fruits, vegetables, protein
- avoid fats, rich foods, dairy, sugar
- dry foods and carbohydrates may be tolerated better
- have something readily available to eat upon waking before getting out of bed
- rest and relax
- get some fresh air and avoid strong cooking odors
- suck on ice chips or frozen fruit juice cubes
- ginger capsules, ginger tea, ginger ale, fresh ginger
- peppermint, chamomile, or lavender tea
- peppermint essential oil used as aromatherapy
- vitamin B6 and unisom at bedtime
- acupressure with Sea Bands
- acupuncture

Backache

The increasing weight of the growing baby, movements of a body that has a shifting center of gravity, stress of the kidneys, and difficulty of sitting and rising out of bed can contribute to backache during pregnancy. It is especially common in the third trimester when the weight of the growing baby pulls on the spine and the muscles and ligaments of the pelvis are weak.

Backache must be differentiated from certain complications of pregnancy such as preterm labor or pyelonephritis.

Comfort measures and remedies:

- be aware of your posture
- chiropractic care
- acupuncture
- do pelvic rocks to tone muscles and improve posture and circulation
- warm baths with epsom salts
- sleep with pillows supporting your legs/back/belly
- avoid standing for long periods of time
- be careful how you bend and lift things: try keeping your back straight and knees bent
- wear flat or low heels
- apply hot pads to sore muscles alternating with cold pads to promote circulation
- make sure your magnesium, vitamin C, and calcium intake is adequate
- swimming/hydrotherapy
- abdominal support band
- comfrey or nettle tea
- St. John's Wort tincture

Constipation

Constipation in pregnancy is common due to hormonal changes, pressure from the growing uterus, and even some recommended supplements. It can usually be solved quickly and without causing too much discomfort.

Comfort measures and remedies:

- Senna leaf tea
- Flaxseed
- Calm magnesium powder
- stool softeners
- increasing fluid and dietary fiber intake
- glycerin suppositories
- enemas
- limit dairy as this can lead to constipation
- increase daily activity such as walking and stretching
- Metamucil or other fiber therapy if constipation is chronic

Do not use castor oil as this can cause premature contractions or premature labor. If you are struggling to have a bowel movement for longer than 7 days, discuss this with your midwife.

Heartburn

Indigestion and heartburn are especially common in late pregnancy when the stomach has a smaller space in which to expand. Due to hormonal changes, digestion slows down in pregnancy and the liver works less efficiently. Additionally, hormones relax the sphincter of the stomach making it easier for acid to escape into the esophagus, resulting in the burning pain of heartburn.

To prevent heartburn:

- eat smaller, more frequent meals
- eat slowly and chew everything thoroughly
- hydrate thoroughly between meals but don't drink while eating
- cut out fatty foods
- avoid products containing baking soda
- pay attention to which foods make heartburn worse for you
- reduce caffeine intake
- relax before eating, sit down for 5 minutes before eating
- avoid bending over
- don't eat too close to bedtime
- try sleeping propped up on pillows

To ease heartburn:

- anise, chamomile, or fennel seed tea
- lemon or peppermint essential oil aromatherapy
- eat papaya after meals: fresh or supplement
- eat raw almonds
- take slippery elm supplement or lozenges
- take a spoonful of honey

Hemorrhoids

Hemorrhoids are varicose veins of the rectum/anus. They are caused in part by the pressure of the growing uterus on all of the veins in the pelvic area, partly by hormonal changes which cause the muscles and walls of the veins to relax, and partly by a diet lacking in fiber.

Hemorrhoids can manifest as small round lumps, bluish or reddish in color, around or protruding from the anus. They can also be internal. Hemorrhoids can be painless or can itch, burn, and bleed.

Symptoms of hemorrhoids should be differentiated from thrombosis of rectal veins, which may be an indication for medical intervention. Those that should be evaluated include persistent rectal bleeding, pain, or throbbing, or inability to defecate because of painful or enlarged hemorrhoids.

Comfort measures and remedies:

- baking soda: apply wet or dry to take away the itch
- lemon, peppermint, or lavender essential oils
- apply grated, raw potato to ease swelling and pain
- apply comfrey or yellow dock ointment to reduce swelling, stop bleeding, and ease pain
- herbal sitz bath made of witch hazel, plantain leaves, comfrey root, and white oak
- witch hazel compresses
- gentle exercise can improve circulation
- avoid sitting on the toilet for prolonged periods or straining to pass a bowel movement
- increase fiber and roughage
- decrease refined foods and fats
- increase hydration
- avoid standing or sitting for long periods
- natural laxatives or stool softeners

Swelling

Generalized pregnancy edema (swelling) is a common complaint, especially in the third trimester. It is most commonly due to the pull of gravity combined with the increased fluid volume of body fluids and fluid retention. Slight puffiness, which develops in the hands, feet, and ankles and resolves on elevation of the feet and/or resting is normal. Hot weather or sitting or standing for long periods will make this worse.

Discuss your swelling with your midwife. Contact us immediately if the swelling becomes excessive, spreading up the shin and your finger leaves an indentation in the skin when pressed. Be aware of the onset of headaches, visual disturbances, or right sided epigastric pain accompanying the edema, and call us if this presents.

Comfort measures:

- maintain good hydration
- exercise
- maintain a healthy, high protein diet
- increase calcium intake
- warm baths with epsom salt
- raspberry, nettle, and dandelion teas
- lemon essential oil
- dandelion or alfalfa supplement
- compression socks
- avoid prolonged periods of sitting or standing
- keep legs elevated if sitting cannot be avoided

Round Ligament Pain

During early pregnancy, as the body reacts to physical changes and loosening of the soft tissues, sharp, intermittent pains may be felt. They may also occur towards the end of pregnancy as the uterus presses down on the pelvic nerves. These pains are generally localized to the lower quadrants and the pelvic areas and may sometimes radiate down the legs. They are usually short lived and harmless.

Should you feel the pain is continuous or in a 'coming and going' pattern, increasing in strength, or you experience a fever or other gastrointestinal issues, call the midwife. Round ligament pain may be precipitated by sudden position changes or certain movements.

Comfort measures:

- warm baths with epsom salt
- heat applied to the area
- slow movements and position changes
- use log-roll motion when turning over in bed
- pelvic rocks
- avoid sudden jerking movements that require twisting or turning at the waist
- bend at the waist towards the side that hurts or lie on that side curled up: this shortens the ligament
- belly band

Varicose Veins

The softening of the tissues in pregnancy can affect the walls and valves in the veins. The extra weight being carried added to the increased blood volume may stress the leg and pelvic veins. If the veins are weak, blood can pool in the leg and pelvic areas causing the veins to stretch and become unsightly, knotted, or lumpy. Varicose veins may be sore or painful, may itch, or cause the whole area to ache, especially when standing for any length of time. Varicosities in the vulvar area are more difficult to relieve without laying down and taking pressure away from the area.

Always consult with your midwife if you notice:

- red area on skin that is hot to the touch
- vein feels firm and cord-like
- tenderness to palpation over vein
- pain in calf with sneezing, coughing, or flexion of the ankle

Comfort measures and remedies:

- regular exercise to keep muscle tone healthy
- compression socks
- wear loose clothing
- avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time
- witch hazel, black tea, white oak, or yarrow compresses
- lemon essential oil
- horizontal rest 2-3 times/day
- vitamin E supplement
- nettle tea
- avoid hot spices, sauces, and curries
- avoid constipation

Fatigue/Insomnia

Tiredness can be completely debilitating during pregnancy. Major causes are hormonal and physical changes, unexpressed or unresolved emotional difficulties, and anemia.

Comfort measures:

- ensure adequate periods for sleep - may be as much as 8-12 hours/day
- take periods for napping/resting during the day
- eat well from a wide range of foods, including plenty of protein
- ensure good hydration
- chamomile tea
- lavender essential oil aromatherapy
- warm bath with epsom salt
- Natural Calm magnesium supplement
- exercise during the day
- explore relaxation techniques like yoga or meditation
- melatonin (not in first trimester)

Leg Cramps

Cramps are sudden muscular contractions often caused by change in body temperature, position, or dehydration. Cramps can be exacerbated in warmer weather as perspiration can cause a drop in the level of body salts.

Comfort measures:

- extend calf by dorsiflexion of foot
- heat, massage
- balance dairy intake
- increase calcium intake
- Natural Calm magnesium supplement
- warm bath with epsom salt
- exercise
- yoga and other stretches
- pelvic rocks to assist circulation
- avoid sitting with ankles crossed

Emotions

Pregnancy is a time of physical, emotional, and even social change which has different effects on each person depending on a number of factors. Hormonal, emotional, and physical changes may cause emotional 'mood swings' especially in the first and third trimesters.

Fears are a normal part of pregnancy. Explore them with your partner or a good friend, being as honest as you can. Take your anxieties seriously and discuss them with your midwife.

To feel energetic and peaceful:

- regular, moderate exercise prevents fatigue, depression, and elevates emotions
- deep relaxation
- meditation
- affirmations and visualizations
- self care such as getting a massage, mani/pedi, taking a bath
- address your 'guilts' - be less strict with yourself over household tasks, routines, and work
- raspberry leaf and chamomile teas
- diffuse essential oils
- motherwort tincture drops in a glass of water

Seek help if you are floundering and find that talking to a partner or friend is not helping. A counselor or therapist may be valuable to you. Please see page 41 for recommendations.

Yeast Infection

The most common symptoms of a yeast infection are itching and burning of the area outside the vagina. The burning may be worse with urination or sex. The vulva may be red and swollen. The vaginal discharge is usually white, lumpy, and has no odor. Some people with yeast infections notice an increase or change in discharge. Others notice no discharge at all.

Comfort measures and remedies:

- eating plain yogurt can help keep yeast levels low in the stomach and intestines, which can help prevent vaginal yeast
- Monistat 7 is an over the counter option that clears up infections within a week
- taking probiotics at the same time as treating a yeast infection (or while taking any antibiotics) can help repopulate the gut with healthy bacteria that keeps yeast in check
- wear cotton underwear
- keep the affected area dry
- avoid eating processed foods and sugar, and reduce the amount of simple carbohydrates in your diet

Itching

Itchy skin without a rash is common in pregnancy, especially towards the end. The skin can itch all over or just abdominally where it is being stretched and is accentuated if the skin is dry. The itchiness can be made worse by heat. Contributory factors include weight gain and hormonal changes. If the itchiness is overwhelming on your palms and soles, contact us right away. This could be Intrahepatic Cholestasis of Pregnancy, a serious condition.

Comfort measures:

- include plenty of fruits and vegetables in your diet
- drink plenty of water to help cleanse the liver
- add lemon to your water as this also cleanses the liver
- eating lots of protein
- take an Omega-3 supplement
- milk thistle, yellow dock, and dandelion supplements
- avoid eating large amounts of sugar, especially refined sugars
- oatmeal baths and compresses
- peppermint, chamomile, lavender, or eucalyptus essential oils mixed with olive oil massaged over the area
- witch hazel compresses
- aloe vera gel
- calamine lotion
- benadryl cream

Pruritus Urticarial Papules and Plaques of Pregnancy (PUPPP)

You may hear or read about PUPPP; this is a rash that can develop in the third trimester that presents as an itchy, pimply skin eruption on the abdomen, especially in stretch marks. The lesions can spread to the thighs and extremities while the palms and soles remain unaffected. It is most common in first time moms and those carrying multiples. There is no test to diagnose PUPPP, it is diagnosed clinically and to the exclusion of other conditions.

Cold and Flu

You may be more susceptible to picking up a cold or the flu due to a more compromised immune system while pregnant. You can boost and support your immune system by eating a good quality diet and taking vitamin B and C supplements. Proper hygiene and staying away from anyone that is ill is also beneficial. If you do develop a sickness in pregnancy, it is important to rest and increase your fluid intake until the symptoms subside.

If any of the following symptoms occur, call us for further help:

- fever greater than 102F or fever for more than 48 hours
- shortness of breath or chest pains
- inability to retain liquids for more than 24 hours

Comfort measures and remedies:

- thieves spray or essential oil
- homeopathics (Cold, Cough, FluPlus, or Sinusin) depending on your symptoms
- massage lavender oil on sore muscles and cover with a heating pad
- saline drops
- humidifier
- neti pot
- menthol ointment
- saltwater gargle
- hot tea with honey and lemon
- elderberry syrup
- let the fever work for you
- Robitussin for cough relief

Seasonal Allergies

Rhinitis (seasonal allergies) during pregnancy can be due to allergic rhinitis, sinusitis, or non-allergic rhinitis. If you have had allergic rhinitis prior to pregnancy, this could worsen, stay the same, or even improve. This change in symptoms may be dependent upon many factors, including the presence of seasonal allergies and increase in pregnancy hormones.

Non-allergic rhinitis in pregnancy may also be due to an increase in pregnancy hormones, leading to nasal congestion, runny nose, and post nasal drip. The symptoms may mimic allergies but since they are non-allergic in nature, do not respond to antihistamines.

Comfort measures and remedies:

- lavender, eucalyptus, and wintergreen essential oil applied to the forehead or cheeks
- nettle tea or capsules
- homeopathics (Allergy, Adirisin, Luffeel, Oculoheel) depending on your symptoms
- nasal saline
- antihistamines
- decongestants
- medicated nasal spray

Abdominal and Uterine Discomfort

The stretching and straining of the body as it accommodates the growing uterus can cause abdominal pains; muscles, ligaments, and nerves are continually adapting. The pressure of the baby and its moving body parts, especially the head, can cause pain in the abdomen as they move against the bladder, kidneys, ovaries, rectum, or up in the ribs. This is normally transient and comfort can be found by changing position. If the constant movement and stretching leaves you feeling bruised and sore, you can try:

- arnica tablets or gel
- lavender essential oil
- warm bath with epsom salt

More unusual but distressing are the sharp pains, which can dart around too quickly to be easily pinned down or described. They come and go but changing positions doesn't help. You can try:

- massage
- cimicifuga pellets

Braxton Hicks Contractions

Sometimes referred to as 'false labor' pains, these contractions occur painlessly and with varying frequency throughout the pregnancy. They can start as early as 20 weeks. It is important to differentiate Braxton Hicks from labor, especially prior to 37 weeks gestation. BH are mostly painless and do not form a regular pattern. They can vary in length and strength, and may occur for a few hours or for mere minutes. If you are being bothered by BH contractions:

- ensure you are well hydrated
- take a warm bath with epsom salt
- do some yoga stretches
- massage

If you feel that the contractions are regular and becoming stronger, try timing them for a while. Timing from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next will tell you how far apart they are. Timing from the beginning of one to the end of it will tell you how long they last. If, after one hour of timing, you feel a regular pattern of consistent, increasing strength and length contractions, call us.

Irritable Uterus

Uterine irritability is a stressful and annoying pregnancy problem in which you can experience regular and strengthening contractions that appear to mimic early labor but are not producing any cervical changes. Irritable uterus is not an indication of labor and can become exhausting as it can last for days on end with little relief in between. This condition can be very disappointing to you as your hopes are raised that you may be in labor.

It is important to rule out labor; you can time the contractions from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next to tell you how far apart they are. Timing from the beginning of one to the end of it will tell you how long they last. You should also call the midwife immediately if you notice:

- vaginal bleeding or watery leakage from the vagina
- pressure on your pelvis
- lower back pain that seems to have a pattern
- slowed fetal movement

Comfort measures:

- ensure you are well hydrated
- increased rest
- meditation and visualization
- gentle yoga stretches
- warm bath with epsom salt
- Natural Calm magnesium supplement
- massage
- treat any vaginal infections or UTIs as these can cause uterine irritability

Urinary Tract Infections

The blood volume increased 50% during pregnancy. Your kidneys, responsible for cleaning the blood, are called upon to work harder, and your entire urinary system becomes more vulnerable to stress and infection.

Throughout pregnancy, be alert for warning signs of bladder or urinary tract infections:

- an urgent or frequent need to urinate, often with little result
- a burning sensation during urination
- mild or severe aching or cramping in the abdomen
- fever and/or chills
- excessive tiredness or lethargy

Prompt treatment of early symptoms and preventative action are the safest courses for bladder infections that can occur at any time during pregnancy. Without treatment, UTIs can lead to major kidney infection (pyelonephritis), kidney failure, premature labor and delivery, and premature rupture of membranes. Any of the above means transferring out of our care to a doctor's care.

Comfort measures:

- take probiotics (acidopholus and lactobacillus)
- wear cotton underwear and avoid tight fitting clothes
- drink plenty of fluids low in sugar
- urinate when you feel the urge - bacteria flourish in held urine
- wipe from front to back and urinate after sex
- drink unsweetened cranberry juice
- D-Mannose
- marshmallow root
- increase vitamin C intake
- antibiotics if the infection has a high colony count or you desire them

Other Common Discomforts

Sore Breasts

- wear a well-fitted bra or go without
- apply wet or dry heat
- use vitamin E oil on your nipples (not while breastfeeding)

Shortness of Breath

- sit up straight to make for more lung space
- take your time standing up
- do full arm circle exercises, breathing in deeply on the upswing

Gas

- eliminate offending foods
- pelvic rocks
- papaya enzymes
- Gas X

Bleeding Gums

- increase vitamin C intake
- see your dentist and floss regularly
- apply white oak bark powder to your gums or swish with the tea form

Headache

- drink lots of water
- warm baths
- peppermint essential oil
- relax and rest
- do head and neck rolls
- see a chiropractor
- massage
- take pain relievers if severe

Stretch Marks

- apply oils or cocoa butter frequently to your skin
- increase foods containing vitamin E
- can be genetic, so oils and lotions may not help for everyone

Perineal Massage

Massaging the perineum (tissue surrounding the vaginal opening) a few times a week for the last 6 weeks of pregnancy may help avoid the need for an episiotomy and/or prevent tearing by reducing the resistance in the vaginal and perineal tissue. In addition, strengthening and learning to relax the pelvic floor muscles is beneficial.

You can massage yourself using your thumbs, but it is probably easier for your partner to do this with you. Make sure your bladder is empty and that you are propped up comfortably. When first starting, you might find that a warm bath softens your tissue. Use a mirror the first few times so that you become familiar with the area.

Massage a natural oil (olive, coconut) or lubricant into the tissue of the perineum and lower vaginal wall. Pay special attention to any scar tissue from previous lacerations.

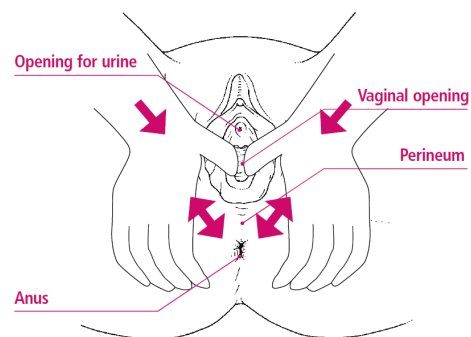
Have your partner put both index fingers (or you put your thumbs) about 2 inches into the vagina and press downward toward your rectum. While maintaining steady pressure, the fingers should be moved upward along the sides of the vagina in a rhythmic “U” or “sling” type movement. Be sure to avoid the urinary opening.

As you massage each night, your tissue should stretch and relax. Have your partner gently stretch the vaginal opening as wide as possible each time until you feel a tingling or slight burning sensation. This will help you recognize the sensation you will experience when your baby’s head starts to crown.

Hold the stretch, without hurting for 30-60 seconds, then release. Massage with more oil, stretch again to maximum hold, then release.

In the beginning, you will feel tight, but with time and practice, the tissue will relax and stretch. If you do the massage faithfully, your partner will be able to insert more fingers as your perineum becomes more elastic.

This massage should not be painful. If you have any problems, consult your midwife.



Supply List

Many of these items can be found at the dollar store or drugstore. There is no need to spend much money as these things will likely be thrown away. Please have all of the items gathered and ready for your 34 week home visit so the midwife knows where to find it when she attends your birth.

- ❖ Old/Cheap towels and washcloths (that can be thrown away or cut up)
- ❖ Package of disposable chux pads (large puppy pads also work for this)
- ❖ Use old/cheap sheets for bed
- ❖ 1-2 shower curtains to protect your mattress.
- ❖ Roll of paper towels
- ❖ 2 - Large garbage bags
- ❖ Depends on large overnight pads
- ❖ Cheap bowl for placenta
- ❖ 1 bottle of Hydrogen peroxide and alcohol
- ❖ 1 small bottle of olive oil
- ❖ Extra strength Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- ❖ Heating pad
- ❖ Flashlight
- ❖ Empty laundry basket – put all of these supplies in it
- ❖ Thermometer
- ❖ 2 – 1 Gallon freezer bags – for placenta
- ❖ Small container of Oxi-clean (optional)
- ❖ 1 container of Clorox/Lysol wipes
- ❖ 3-4 receiving blankets (that you don't mind potentially tossing out)

Making your bed for labor/birth: Start with a plastic covering on your mattress, either a shower curtain, drop cloth, or mattress cover. Next, add your bottom sheet and top sheet. Then place another set of plastic on top of the top sheet. Make your bed with your labor/birth set of sheets on top of the second plastic cover. The top set will be stripped after birth and your bed will be ready for your postpartum period. For pillows, place the bare pillow in a kitchen size trash bag and tie off (drawstring works well for this purpose), place pillowcase on as usual over the plastic. This will protect your pillows.

Eating During Labor

It's a good idea to eat a nutritious meal sometime soon after you go into labor. We recommend something with protein and complex carbohydrates (whole grains, beans, lentils, potatoes, etc) to help sustain you during labor.

Later, during the more active part of labor, many people do not feel like eating anything heavy. It is important to have light foods available to keep your energy levels up such as fresh fruit, honey sticks, protein balls, popsicles, granola bars, etc. Maintaining your blood sugar will help you throughout labor.

After birth, we will require you to eat a substantial meal before walking around. This ensures that you won't become lightheaded or faint. This can be a hearty soup, sandwich with meat, steak and potatoes, or other comfort food containing protein.

Pediatricians

The following is a list of pediatricians who have been used and recommended by our families. Practices are subject to change, so be sure to call and check on their policies and that they will accept babies born outside of a hospital before committing.

Tampa

Wholistic Pediatrics
3405 W Fletcher Ave
813-960-3415

Sunshine Pediatrics
18934 N Dale Mabry
813-948-2679

New Horizons Pediatrics
14471 University Cove Pl
813-488-4100

Clearwater

Blue Wave Medical Associates
1822 Drew St Ste 102
727-303-3117

New Port Richey

Pediatric Specialist Medical Group
2044 Trinity Oaks Blvd Ste 235
727-375-5437

Sarasota

Happy Soul Pediatrics
5212 Station Way
941-900-3787

Wesley Chapel

Wesley Chapel Internal Medicine and Pediatrics
2038 Ashley Oaks Cir Ste 102
813-929-3622

Land O Lakes

My Pediatrics
20646 Wilderness Lake Blvd
813-966-9713

Lutz

Life Choices Family Medical
18560 N Dale Mabry
813-948-7734

St. Petersburg

All4Kidz
1907 Tyrone Blvd N
727-317-2117

St Petersburg Pediatrics
2701 54th Ave S
727-867-5788

Spring Hill

All Pediatric Care
11009 Hearth Rd
352-688-5700

Hernando Children's Pediatrics
11335 Cortez Blvd
352-597-7373

Riverview

WeeCare for Kids
11948 Balm Riverview Rd
813-236-9000

Brandon

Nadal Pediatrics (North Brandon)
621 Victoria St
813-655-0292

Nadal Pediatrics (Bloomingtondale)
376 E Bloomingtondale Ave
813-681-7101

Various Locations

Pediatric Healthcare Alliance
pedialliance.com

Concierge Services

WeeCare for Kids Too - Dr. Heather Thole
813-236-9000

Chiropractors

Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy restores balance to the pelvic muscles and ligaments, and can lead to safer and easier births. If you are already in the care of a chiropractor, you should continue to have regular adjustments throughout your pregnancy, ensuring that they are familiar with the care of pregnant people. Your newborn can even see the chiropractor soon after they're born! If you need recommendations, here are some chiropractors that are Webster certified.

Tampa

Innate Chiropractic and Wellness
6408 W Linebaugh Ave Unit 105
813-808-7271

Navigate Chiropractic
11274 W Hillsborough Ave
813-906-5902

Optilife Chiropractic
8377 Gunn Hwy
813-926-9500

Chiropractic and Holistic Center of
Tampa
6610 E Fowler Ave Ste D
813-701-7272

Lutz

Full Life Chiropractic
21754 State Rd 54 Ste 101
813-428-5648

Wesley Chapel

Cypress Creek Chiropractic & Wellness
2304 Crestover Ln Ste 102
813-994-5455

Safety Harbor

Dr. Sarah Bober
670 2nd St N
727-351-2811

Clearwater

TruChiropractic
2519 McMullen Booth Rd Unit 509
813-551-1846

St. Petersburg

Happy Healthy Spine
3511 5th Ave N
727-767-0564

Blossom Family Chiropractic
360 Central Ave Ste 1200
727-498-5643

Doulas

Doulas are trained professionals that provide continuous physical, emotional, and informational support before, during, and after childbirth. We believe everyone should have a doula as part of their birth team! They can help you advocate for the birth you desire and will be there to guide you as things progress. There are lots of doulas out there, so be sure to interview and find the one that is right for you. Here are some recommended doulas to help you get started.

- 3 Gems Birth Services (Courtney West)
- At Peace Doula (Tessa Nichols)
- Bejay Connolly
- Better Together Birthing (Jessica Fontaine)
- Buddha Belly
- Doula Hive
- Erika Washburn
- Hypnotherapy Mind (Candice Enriquez)
- Jazzlyn Smith
- Marleen Richardson
- One Love
- The Mindful Doula (Morgan Hellstern)
- Yolanda Corteo
- Your Call Doula (Cara Call)

Childbirth Education Classes

Per Florida Law and Rule, we are required to have each client participate in a childbirth education class. During your prenatal visits, we share lots of information with you, but these classes are designed to give you the tools you'll need to birth your baby. It is important to learn information specific to comfort measures in labor, ways your partner can assist, and more.

If you have had a previous out-of-hospital birth within the last 2 years, you can waive this requirement. Here are some local educators that we recommend:

-Doula Hive

Teaches traditional and expedited classes, and offers lactation services

<https://doulahive.com/childbirth-prep-classes>

-Hypnotherapy Mind (Candice Enriquez)

Teaches Hypnobirthing

<https://hypnotherapymind.com/hypnobirthing>

-Belly to Breast (Kialha Mumma)

Teaches traditional classes, offers lactation services, and is a child passenger safety technician

<https://www.bellytobreast.com>

-Denby Beauchamp

Teaches Hypnobirthing

<https://happiestbirths.com/>

Circumcision

We are often asked about circumcision. This is a personal decision for parents to make and is not considered a medical necessity. Circumcision is classified as a cosmetic procedure and is not covered by many insurance carriers or Medicaid.

If you would like more information about the procedure, please use the resources listed below.

Circumcision Information and Resources

www.cirp.org

Evidence Based Birth

<https://evidencebasedbirth.com/evidence-and-ethics-on-circumcision/>

Providers:

Andrew Gellady
Pediatric Specialist Medical Group
2044 Trinity Oaks Blvd Ste 235
New Port Richey
727-375-5437

Children's Urology Group
4712 N Armenia Ave Ste 200
Tampa
813-874-7500 - will only perform procedure up to 8 weeks old

Newborn Circumcisions of Tampa Bay
Brenda Marshall-Accardi
813-844-7055

Mental Health

Perinatal and postpartum mood disorders (PPMD) can affect up to 20% of people during pregnancy and after giving birth. This can include conditions like depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, psychosis, and more. Hormonal shifts, environmental circumstances, and pre-existing diagnoses can result in developing PPMD. We know there might be some stigma associated with mental health, but we are here to support you in whatever way we can.

We encourage you to be in touch with your emotions and alert your trusted support system (partner, a close friend, family, etc) if you notice a change in your demeanor. We want to treat any PPMD as soon as possible, so please reach out to us if you have any concerns. If it is an urgent situation, call 911.

Below are some local groups and counselors that may be able to help you if you need extra support.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org ; 800-273-8255

Groups:

-Postpartum Support International - FL Chapter
psichapters.com/fl

-Suncoast Center Inc (Pinellas Co)
www.suncoastcenter.org

-Healthy Families FL
www.healthyfamiliesfla.org

-BayCare St. Joseph's Women's Hospital
Postpartum Depression Support Group
<https://baycare.org/locations/hospitals/st-josephs-womens-hospital/services/maternity/postpartum-support>

Counselors:

-Growth and Wellness MHC
www.growthandwellnessmhc.com

-Ellie Mental Health
www.elliementalhealth.com

-Evelyn Ojeda-Fox
www.evelynojeda.com

-Lisa Bentivenga
www.therapywithlisab.com

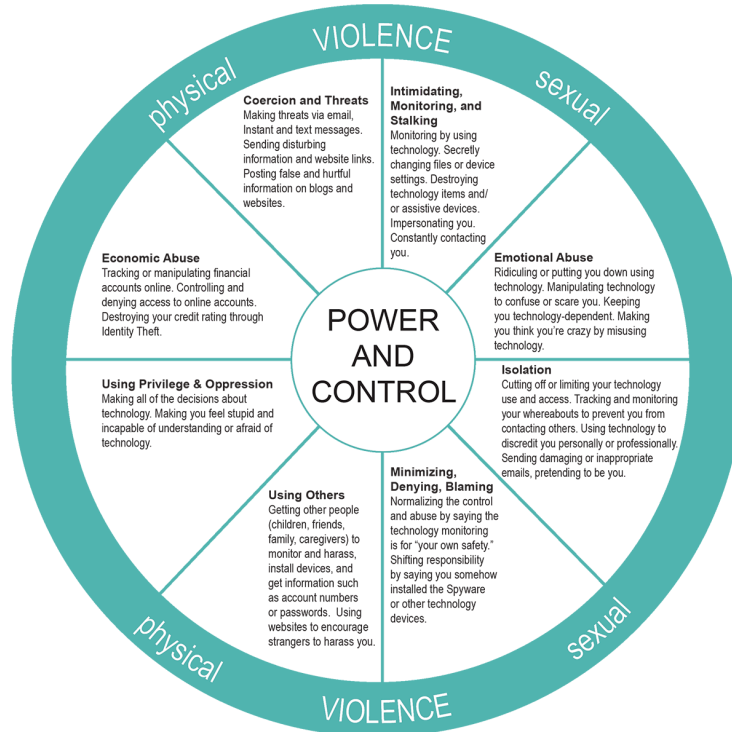
-ProTherapy Plus
www.protherapyplus.com

-Megan Richardson
www.thrivetherapyflorida.com

Domestic Violence, Abuse, and Crisis Resources

If you or someone you know is being abused, break the cycle - end the silence.

We take reports of abuse seriously. We are here to help and are a confidential place to turn to if you think you or someone you know is being abused. This resource page is a collection of the many organizations serving the Tampa Bay area and beyond.



Domestic Violence and Abuse Resources:

- The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
www.crisiscenter.com ; 813-964-1964
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline
www.thehotline.org ; 800-799-7233
- United Way Crisis Hotline
www.211.org ; dial 211
- The Spring of Tampa Bay (shelter)
www.thespring.org ; 813-247-7233
- Dawning Family Services (for pregnant clients)
www.dawningfamilyservices.org ;
813-875-2024

Other Resources:

- Al-Anon
www.tampabayalanon.org ; 813-881-9372
- Nar-Anon
www.tampa-na.org ; 813-879-4357
- WIC: Women, Infants, & Children
www.fns.usda.gov/wic ; 800-342-3556
- Healthy Start Coalition
www.healthystartcoalition.org ;
813-233-2800