



PREGNANCY CHECKLIST

Because you're pregnant, it's important to maintain or establish good health habits — for you and your baby.

Your health care professional will guide you from your first appointment through delivery and beyond. Be sure to keep all of your appointments or reschedule them within a day or two. Each appointment is intentionally timed to match milestones that need to be watched during pregnancy. This allows your health care team to monitor you and your baby as well as offers you the opportunity to have important conversations with your doctor.

Here are a some conversation starters to take with you to your next appointment with your health care professional.



HEALTH CONCERNS

You should feel comfortable discussing your health and the health of your baby, changes in your body, symptoms and more with your health care professional.

- Is my (insomnia, ravenous hunger, mood swings, headaches, nausea/vomiting, lightheadedness/palpitations) normal?
- How much weight gain is healthy in pregnancy?
- How does my health affect my baby?



PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

If you have a preexisting condition, such as a congenital heart defect (CHD), hypertension or diabetes, be sure to tell your health care professional. You and your health care professional can have on-going conversations about any preexisting conditions throughout your pregnancy and postpartum, as well as how to coordinate care with any specialists.

- How will my [condition] impact my pregnancy?
- Will my current health affect my baby's health?
- Based on my age and health, am I considered high risk for pregnancy? If so, what are those risks? How can I mitigate those risks to have a healthy pregnancy?
- Will I need to see any specialists? If so, will you continue to be one of my doctors throughout my pregnancy? Risk factors and family history.

If cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, depression and/or other serious health issues run in your family, it's important to tell your health care professional. Your age, weight and race also can be risk factors for pregnancy-related conditions.

- What are the best ways to mitigate the chances of complications during my pregnancy?
- What are the major complications I need to be aware of? How might they affect my baby?
- If I have a risk factor or health condition, will you still be my doctor? Will I need to go to a specialist



WEIGHT AND BLOOD PRESSURE

At each visit, your health care team will check your weight and blood pressure. These numbers are important for you and your baby. Keep a log of your blood pressure readings as well as your other numbers from every visit so you can easily track your health over the course of your pregnancy (download a printable blood pressure log at goredforwomen.org/pregnancy).

- Am I gaining the right amount of weight?
- Is my blood pressure in a healthy range? How is it trending over time?
- Should I monitor my blood pressure at home?
- What behaviors or habits do I need to modify or look out for to make sure my numbers stay in a healthy range?



CHECKS AND TESTS

During your pregnancy, you'll have routine screenings such as urinalyses, blood panels and blood glucose tests. Depending on your health and history, other tests may be necessary. Keep a log of the results of all your tests and lab work so you can easily track your health over the course of your pregnancy.

- What will these tests show about my health? What will these tests show about my baby's health?
- Will you let me know the results of my urinalyses during every appointment?
- If the results aren't "normal," what action do I need to take?



PREVIOUS PREGNANCY HISTORY OR COMPLICATIONS

Your health during past pregnancies can help signal potential problems and allow doctors to intervene if needed.

- How much will my (gestational diabetes/preeclampsia/peripartum cardiomyopathy) affect my current pregnancy?
- Will I need to have additional tests?
- Are there steps I should take now to reduce my risk based on my history?
- Should I also be seeing any specialists? If I am currently seeing a specialist, how will you coordinate care throughout my pregnancy?



INFERTILITY TREATMENTS

Women who've had infertility treatments may face higher risk for some pregnancy and vascular complications.

- Will my treatments affect me and my baby?
- Are there signs or symptoms of which I need to be especially aware?



MEDICATIONS

Some medications, including some heart medicines, may be risky for you or your baby during pregnancy. Your health care team will tell you what's safe and may also recommend other medications or vitamins, especially prenatal vitamins, to improve or maintain your health.

- Which medications are safe for me to take? Which one should I avoid?
- Should I be taking a prenatal vitamin? (If you are taking vitamins or supplements, share these with your doctor.)
- Should I be taking a daily low-dose aspirin? If so, when and how long should I take it for? *(Do not start a low-dose aspirin regimen without consulting with your health care professional.)*



NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

Eating lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and beans and staying active are important for your pregnancy to be as healthy as possible. Exercising during pregnancy can help lower the risk of cardiovascular disease for you and your baby, even years after delivery, but be sure to discuss your exercise regimen with your health care professional.

- I am currently exercising - is it safe for me to continue and at what level?
- How much should I be exercising? What types of exercise do you recommend?
- Are there potentially dangerous symptoms specific to my health issues I should be aware of while I'm exercising?
- Should my eating patterns change? Do I need to eat more while I'm pregnant?
- I am a [vegetarian/pescatarian/vegan]. How do I make sure I'm getting the proper nutrition during my pregnancy?



SMOKING AND DRINKING ALCOHOL

If you use tobacco/vaping products, e-cigarettes, and/or drink alcohol, be sure to stop.

- How do you recommend I stop using tobacco/vaping products, e-cigarettes, and/or drinking alcohol?



MANAGING STRESS AND ANXIETY

Caring for your overall well-being is important for you and your baby during pregnancy. Take time to breathe deeply, meditate, get a good night's sleep and keep up your exercise routine (even if on some days that means just walking around the block). If you're feeling anxious, depressed or having prolonged or abnormal feelings, talk to your health care professional.

- How much sleep do I need?
- Is my (anxiety/stress/depression/feelings of sadness) normal?
- What are healthy ways to better manage my (anxiety/stress/depression/feelings of sadness) while I'm pregnant?

For more support or to connect with other moms and caregivers who have experienced pregnancy-related cardiovascular conditions, check out the American Heart Association's **Support Network Maternal Health Forum (supportnetwork.heart.org)**.

To learn more, visit **goredforwomen.org/pregnancy** and have a conversation with your health care professional.