



STRONG START OHIO
Healthcare Quality Improvement for Mothers and Babies



Strong Start **Toolkit** for You and Your Baby

Welcome to a Strong Start to Your Pregnancy

Congratulations!

You're pregnant!

This can be exciting and a little bit scary. You may have questions and worries. We are here for you!

Now what?

Answer the questions in this tool as much as you can and share it with your doctor.*

This tool will help you:

- Get you and your baby ready for your doctor* visits.
- Make healthy choices for you and your baby.
- Work with your doctor* to get the care you need for you and your baby.

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner

Did you know?

These are important to you and your baby's health:

- Getting help and support you need
- Eating healthy and exercising
- Gaining the right amount of weight
- Managing your stress level
- Avoiding tobacco, alcohol, and drugs
- Checking if the medicine you take is safe for your baby
- Managing any medical and social issues





How About You?

You and your doctor* can use this list to help you have a healthier pregnancy. You don't have to tackle everything at once. Ask yourself, "If I can't do it all, what can I do?" Talk to your nurse and doctor. They can help.

Use the following two pages to tell us what you would like to have help with.

Do you have a support person to help you during your pregnancy and after you have your baby?



☐ Yes ☐ No

HOUSING

•And services like electric and water



☐ Yes ☐ No

FOOD

- Food stamps
- Getting healthy foods
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program



☐ Yes ☐ No

OTHER THINGS LIKE:

- Clothing
- Cash assistance
- Child care
- Phone
- Getting places you need to go
- Health insurance
- Finding the right doctor* for you



☐ Yes ☐ No



Please check any medications you are taking

It is okay to bring the meds with you to your doctor* visit if you don't remember what they are.



- ☐ Prenatal vitamins
- ☐ Acne meds – to help with pimples (zits)
- ☐ Pain meds from a doctor
- ☐ Meds your doctor gives you to calm down
- ☐ Anti-seizure meds
- ☐ Meds for things like depression or anxiety
- ☐ Other (including any meds you get without a prescription)

SAFETY

•Staying safe and making your own choices



- ☐ During the day
- ☐ At night
- ☐ In a relationship
- ☐ I don't worry about my safety

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner

Share With Your Doctor*

Write down any meds you are allergic to:



Tell us about your smoking habits:



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I still smoke: | <input type="checkbox"/> I: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a pack per day | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut back on my smoking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A pack per day | <input type="checkbox"/> Quit smoking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 1/2 packs per day | <input type="checkbox"/> Am interested in quitting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 packs per day | <input type="checkbox"/> Never smoked |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't quit now |

Tell us about your drinking habits:



- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I still drink: | <input type="checkbox"/> I: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every day | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut back on drinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A couple of times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Quit drinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Am interested in quitting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A couple of times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Never drank alcohol |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't quit now |

Tell us about any drugs you get from a friend, family member or on the street:



- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I take drugs: | <input type="checkbox"/> I: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every day | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut back on drugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A couple of times a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Quit doing drugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Am interested in quitting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A couple of times a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Never used drugs |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't quit now |

Do you want more information about addiction/dependency?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Please check any of the problems that you may have:



- ☐ Problems with a previous pregnancy
- ☐ Preterm birth (a birth before the due date)
- ☐ Chronic (long-term) diseases:
 - ☐ Diabetes – high sugar
 - ☐ High blood pressure
 - ☐ Heart problems
 - ☐ Infections
- ☐ A history of emotional problems like depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder
- ☐ Substance abuse or addiction
- ☐ Problems that run in families (genetic disorders)
- ☐ Other: _____



Speak Up!

You probably have a lot more questions! Be sure to write down any other questions you have. Here are some other things you might want to discuss with your doctor.*

Doctor's* name: _____

Doctor's* daytime phone number: _____

After-hours phone number: _____

TAKE NOTES

My baby's due date

What medications to take

What foods are good for me and my baby

If I can keep doing my regular activities like going to work and school

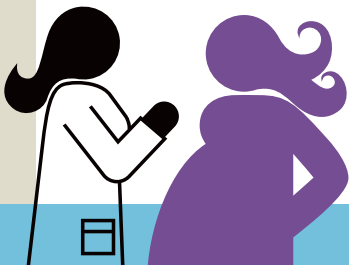
If it is ok to have sex

Other questions I have

Generally, your doctor would like to see you at least every month. Write the date and time of your next visit here: _____

If you need help getting there, plan at least 2 days ahead for your ride! Your health plan can help, so call the number on the back of your card.

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner





Get Ready! What to Expect.

Let's think about what size your baby is as it grows inside of you and what will happen at the doctor's* office. This is a fun way to plan during pregnancy. When you go to your checkups, make sure to ask all of the questions you have.

First Trimester (Weeks 0-12)

Your baby is about the size of a ...

WEEK 6



Poppy Seed

Your baby is a group of cells called an embryo.

WEEK 9



Olive

Your baby moves his/her arms and legs but you can't feel it yet. Now your baby is called a fetus.

WEEK 12



Plum

Your baby's heart and lungs are growing.



At Your Doctor's* Visit:

- First visit!
- Your doctor* will check your uterus and breasts and do a Pap smear.
- You might give urine and blood.
- You might have an ultrasound and get to see your baby!

Second Trimester (Week 12-24)

Your baby is about the size of a ...

WEEKS 16



Avocado

Your baby hears your voice, so sing and talk to her/him!

WEEK 20



Banana

You might feel and see your baby kicking through your belly. Your support person may enjoy this with you!

WEEK 24



Corn

Your baby may suck his/her thumb and can open her/his eyes!



At Your Doctor's* Visit:

- Visit your doctor* every month.
- Your doctor* may talk to you about genetic testing.
- You might find out if your baby is a girl or a boy. You can also ask for a picture.
- Take a test for a type of diabetes that can develop during pregnancy. At the doctor's* office or a lab, you'll drink a sweet drink and have a blood test.

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner



Third Trimester (Weeks 25 and Up)

Your baby is about the size of a ...

WEEK 29



Eggplant

Your baby might know your voice so keep talking, singing, and playing music for your baby.

WEEK 34



Cantaloupe

Your baby may have a head of hair and all five senses are working like touch, taste, and smell.

WEEK 40



Small Watermelon

Your baby is close to entering this world, so get ready to meet your little one!



At Your Doctor's* Visit:

- Visit your doctor* at least twice a month.
- In the last month, visit your doctor* every week.
- Make plans with your doctor* for the birth of your baby.
- Learn the signs that your baby is coming!
- Work closely with your doctor* to help you feel ready!

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner

Notes:



Learn the Labor Signs

You're almost ready for your baby to enter the world.

Know the facts so you can be ready when your baby comes!

Contractions

- Labor is when you start having lots of strong contractions because your baby is about to be born.
- All contractions don't mean you're in labor.
- Use the 5-1-1 Rule to decide what to do. Unless your doctor* tells you something different.

Water Breaks

Leaking fluid is normal during pregnancy, but if you are soaking through your underwear or soaking through a pad in 15-20 minutes, your water may have broken.

Call your doctor!*

5-1-1 Rule

Contact your doctor* or hospital when contractions are:

5 minutes apart

1 minute in length

1 hour continuously

Other Signs

Throwing up, don't feel like eating

Contractions continue and get stronger

Unusual tightening or cramping

Low back pain

Diarrhea

Discharge/mucus plug

Three Stages of Labor

- 1 The lower part of your uterus, called the cervix, is opening.
- 2 Your baby moves down the birth canal and you push it out!
- 3 Delivery of your placenta (the sac that helped your baby grow).

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner



Plan Ahead

Make a plan so you are ready for your baby to be born!

LABOR COMFORT

Labor and birth is a natural process that usually lasts many hours. You can plan ahead to deal with the pain.



Natural

Some women choose not to use medication. They prepare for labor and birth by going to Lamaze classes. They also use things like heating pads, massage, breathing, or a birthing pool to help cope with the pain.

IV medications are given through a needle into a vein in your hand or arm.

They reduce pain, but can make you and your baby feel sleepy.

An epidural makes your lower body numb.

A doctor* puts a tiny tube into your back so you can be given pain medication. You can only get an epidural at certain times during the labor process. You won't be able to walk or get out of bed, and there are some risks.

How are you planning to manage the pain during delivery?

- ☐ Natural ☐ Epidural
☐ IV medications ☐ Only if necessary
☐ Only if necessary ☐ I'm not sure

Would you like to talk to your doctor* about your options?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner

WHO WILL BE WITH YOU

One of the most important decisions is deciding who will be with you during delivery. Having a support person with you can help.



- Think about who will drive you to the hospital
- Have a bag packed and ready

Who do you want to be there? (Hospital policy may limit who can be there. For example, children or people who are sick may not be allowed.)

Who do you NOT want to be there?

Do you need help finding a person to be with you during delivery?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

TYPE OF BIRTH

Vaginal

You push the baby out.

Cesarean (C-Section)

Your doctor* does a small surgery/cut to deliver the baby. This is usually done only if your baby or you are having health problems.





Plan Ahead

This is a great time to think about:

Support

- It's hard work to care for yourself and your baby. Everyone needs help!
- Be sure to find a good support person.
- A good support person will be there when you need them for help.



Breastfeeding

Did you know that breastfeeding...

- Can help your baby be healthier.
- Can help your baby fight infection.
- Is especially good for babies who are born before their due date.
- Is a good time for skin-to-skin contact which helps you and your baby bond.



You can still get WIC if you are breastfeeding.

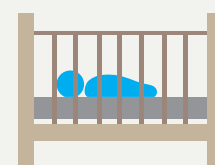
Find a pediatrician, family doctor, or nurse practitioner for your baby

- Before your baby is born, be sure to find a pediatrician that takes your health insurance. Call your health plan ahead of time to get help.
- Find someone who you can talk to as you are raising your baby over the years.
- Your baby's doctor will talk to you about lots of things including:
 - If you're having a boy, you can talk to your doctor* about circumcision (removing the fold of skin [called foreskin] that covers the head of a penis).
 - Scheduling well baby checks to make sure your baby is healthy and growing.
 - Choosing the right car seat.



The ABCs of Safe Sleep

- A** - Your baby is safest sleeping **alone**. You can sleep in the same room with your baby, but not in the same bed. Also, be sure not to nap on a couch or chair with your baby.
- B** - Always put your baby on his/her **back** to sleep. If he/she cries or spits up a lot, talk to your doctor* for help.
- C** - Your baby should sleep in a safe, empty **crib**. That means no blankets, pillows, bumpers, or toys.



*Midwife or Nurse Practitioner



You Did It!

Your doctor* will keep working with you to take care of you and your baby!

See Your Doctor*

After you have your baby, you may feel happy, tired, excited, scared, peaceful, overwhelmed, and unsure of what to do next. This is normal! You may also have symptoms like bleeding or feeling down (depressed).

- Please go to all of your postpartum visits because your doctor* will check to make sure your body is recovering from all the changes.
- Remember that breastfeeding doesn't protect you from getting pregnant again. If you are interested in birth control, talk to your doctor.*

Caring for You and Your Baby

- When your baby is here, you will have a lot to do!
- Your doctor* is still here for you!
- Make sure to go to all the checkups for your baby!

Congratulations!

- We hope this tool has helped.
- Keep this tool in a place that you can find it.
- Feel free to come back to this tool before every doctor* visit.



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