



# 2013-2014 Perinatal Wellness Guidelines

## Routine recommendations for a healthy pregnancy

**Before Pregnancy** - It's important to start making healthy choices and maintaining a healthy weight for a healthy lifestyle. Visit your doctor for a checkup before becoming pregnant.

### First Prenatal Visit

Your doctor will evaluate your personal health and family history. This helps your doctor plan the best care for you and your new baby. The first visit is usually the longest, so be prepared. You may be asked about:

- The date of your last menstrual period to help predict when your new baby will be born
- Health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, or sexually transmitted disease
- Past pregnancies and any complications
- Previous hospital admissions
- Current medicines and vaccination history\*
- Allergies to medicines, foods, etc.
- Whether you drink alcohol, use tobacco or drugs such as marijuana or ecstasy
- Your diet and eating habits, and how much you exercise
- Stress in your life
- How safe you feel in your current living arrangements
- Health history of the baby's father and his family

Your doctor will also examine you, do some tests and offer advice. The doctor may:

- Check your height, weight, and blood pressure
- Perform a physical exam, including a pelvic exam and Pap test to check for cancer or vaginal infection
- Take a urine sample for analysis
- Take blood to test for anemia and certain infections
- Give you a prenatal vitamin

\* Your doctor may suggest a flu shot and/or a tetanus shot. These are safe any time in your pregnancy.



## Later Prenatal Visits

Follow-up visits usually take less time. In addition to the above, your doctor may also:

- Check your hands, feet and face for swelling
- Listen to the baby's heartbeat (beginning as early as week 9)
- Perform an ultrasound (usually at weeks 18 – 20)

You will see your doctor every 4 weeks for the first 28 weeks of pregnancy, then every 2 weeks until 36 weeks of pregnancy, and then weekly until your new baby is born.

Talk with your doctor and bring a list of questions to every visit.\*\*

## After Giving Birth

Keep all doctor's appointments, both before and after your baby is born. It's important to tell your doctor if you:

- Feel tired all the time
- Have changes in your sleep patterns, weight or appetite
- Lose interest in usual activities
- Have difficulty concentrating or making decisions

These could be signs of post partum depression. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat this condition.



\*\* Depending on your health and the health of your unborn baby, your doctor may wish to see you more often and do additional testing.

The recommendations provided in the table are based on information from organizations such as The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the March of Dimes. The recommendations are not intended as medical advice nor meant to be a substitute for the individual medical judgment of a doctor or other health care professional. Please check with your doctor for individualized advice on the recommendations provided.

Sources: <http://www.bcbstx.com/specialbeginnings/calendar.htm?date=4/24/2013&option=1&state=null>  
<http://www.marchofdimes.com/default.html>

Guidelines for Perinatal Care, Seventh Edition, American Academy of Pediatrics and The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

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