

The Second Half of Pregnancy



UR Midwifery Group

125 Lattimore Road Suite 200
Rochester, NY 14620
Monday-Friday

Phone: 585-275-7892
Fax: 585-442-6798
Answering service:
585-258-4970



Fitness and Exercise

Getting regular exercise most days of the week is important. It helps keep your muscles strong enough to handle the extra work of pregnancy and birth, reduces stress and muscular discomforts, and helps control your weight gain.

Aerobics should be low impact. Walking and swimming are two excellent ways to exercise in pregnancy. Prenatal yoga, tai chi, and qi gong are wonderful for increasing balance and flexibility. Allow for adequate warm up and cool down periods. Stretching after exercising is always encouraged. Discuss any exercise restrictions with your providers.

Kegels are an exercise in pregnancy that helps to strengthen the muscles around the vagina. Doing these exercises regularly increases your ability to control and relax these muscles and may prevent tearing during childbirth.

Lab Tests

Our practice follows the national standards for laboratory testing in pregnancy.

DIABETES SCREENING

Between the 26th and 30th week of your pregnancy, you will be screened for diabetes in pregnancy. This type of diabetes is called “gestational diabetes” (GDM). Risk factors for developing GDM include history of gestational diabetes in a prior pregnancy, obesity, being over age 35, and certain races/ethnicities.

The test for gestational diabetes is called a glucose-tolerance test and it is done by consuming a measured amount of glucose sugar in a liquid form and then drawing blood to measure your blood sugar level one hour later. Normal range of blood sugar is 65-120 mg/dl. A level of 135 or more on this test indicates that you may have GDM. To find out, a second test is done, called a 3-hour glucose tolerance test. You will be informed if your lab results are abnormal and if a 3-hour test is indicated.

ANEMIA

During pregnancy your body will be making extra blood to supply your placenta. Your baby will also be making blood and using nutrients from your blood. Blood contains red and white blood cells. When there are not enough red blood cells you have anemia. This can make you feel tired, weak, and dizzy. Many pregnant women become anemic during the pregnancy because they do not have enough iron from the foods in their diet to make the new red blood cells.

We check for anemia at the beginning of pregnancy, again at approximately 28 weeks with your glucose test, and possibly a third time at the end of pregnancy. If your blood test shows anemia, you will be encouraged to begin iron supplement and increase the amount of iron in your diet. A handout on sources of iron in the diet is available in our office.

INFECTIONS

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

If you have had STIs (gonorrhea, chlamydia) in the past, you may be tested again near delivery to be sure there is no infection present that could harm the baby during birth.

Yeast

Women often develop a yeast infection in the vagina during pregnancy. The vaginal discharge becomes thicker or yellow and frequently there is itching around the vaginal area. Tell your midwife if you have any of these symptoms. It is best to clear up yeast infections before labor so the vagina is healthy when the baby is born.

Bacterial Vaginosis

Another vaginal infection that can occur is called Bacterial Vaginosis (BV). The most common causes of BV are an overgrowth of bacteria. Other factors that may contribute to BV include hot weather, poor health, poor hygiene, and vaginal douching. Symptoms you may notice are a fishy odor and an increase in discharge that is usually greenish or yellow in color. BV can cause complications in your pregnancy so it is important to tell your midwife if you are experiencing any of the above symptoms. A handout describing BV as well as STIs is available in our office.

Group B Strep

Streptococcus is a family of bacteria that may normally be in our bowels. There are several type of strep bacteria. The most well know is Group A Strep, which causes strep throat and rheumatic fever. Another kind is Group B strep (GBS), found in the bowels and lower vagina of up to 30% of all women. This is not an infection, just a bacteria living in the vaginal area.

GBS can, however, infect the baby during the birth process by entering the nose, mouth, or lungs of the baby. This infection can include pneumonia, meningitis, generalized infection or, rarely, death. It can also infect the mother's uterus, causing a serious infection after birth.

For these reasons, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that all pregnant women have a culture taken from the lower vagina and the rectal area between 36-37 weeks. If the woman is found to be carrying GBS at that time, treatment during labor with IV antibiotics will significantly decrease the chance of either mother or baby getting ill. The antibiotic used is Penicillin, unless the woman is allergic, in which case an alternative is given. A handout describing GBS is included in this booklet.

Late Pregnancy Discomforts

The last few weeks of pregnancy can be uncomfortable. You can expect to notice increasing pressure, swelling, cramps in your abdomen and legs, back pain, constipation, difficulty sleeping, and frequent urination. Sex may become uncomfortable. It is especially important to drink extra fluid at this time, as well as to rest and elevate your legs and feet whenever possible. Please bring up any concerns during your visits.

Childbirth Preparation

We encourage all of our patients to prepare for the experience of childbirth. For first babies, the best way to prepare is to take classes with a support person or partner. These classes focus on what happens in labor and ways to make it easier. They also provide information on infant care, breastfeeding, and what to expect in the first weeks after the baby is born. Complications and cesarean sections are also covered. Refresher courses are available if it has been several years since your last baby.

We do not recommend one particular class over another. Pick one that is convenient and that offers the information you feel you need. Your provider can also advise you which classes may best meet your needs. Information on the Highland Hospital classes is included in this packet.

Most of the community classes are 4-6 weeks long, so starting around 28-32 weeks pregnant will give you time to complete the series before the baby arrives. We recommend signing up early. Some instructors offer a sliding scale or reduced fee for patients on Medicaid.

Along with childbirth education classes, there are many other resources to help you learn about labor, birth and caring for your baby. These resources can be found in books, magazines, DVDs, or found online. For help finding these educational materials, you can ask the midwife during your appointment or go to online to our website midwifery.urmc.edu and click on patient resources. Don't forget to explore reading materials at your local library, too.

Birth Planning

You have chosen to receive care from a midwifery group partly because of our philosophy of practice. We believe that every individual has the right to safe, satisfying care respecting her dignity and cultural variations. Labor and birth are normal processes, helped by education, support, and shared decision-making. Interventions are necessary only when labor or birth is not going normally

We want to know your personal preferences for your birth. A birth plan is one way to share your preferences with the midwives and nurses who care for you. Sample birth plans are available in our office if you are interested, or you may use one of your own. There are many websites that help you create a birth plan including: Americanpregnancy.org or Thebump.com

Doula Referrals

A doula is a trained support person who you can hire to provide you with additional emotional and physical support in labor. While she is not a medical professional, she can offer you a wide range of comfort measures during labor like massage, aromatherapy, breathing techniques, and position changes. Studies show doulas improve birth outcomes and lower cesarean rates. Prices for doulas range and are based on experience levels. You can find an updated list of local doulas in this packet.

Planning for Baby

PEDIATRIC CARE

You will need a physician or clinic to care for your baby. Your choice includes a family practice doctor and/or family nurse practitioner who can care for your whole family, or a pediatrician or pediatric nurse practitioner who cares only for children. Most pediatricians offer 'get acquainted' visits to help you choose. You may want to look for an office that is conveniently located to your home or work. A listing of pediatric providers is available in the office.

FEEDING

We strongly encourage you to breastfeed and can offer you support with this process. The midwives and nurses in the hospital will help you get a good start. The Highland Hospital lactation consultants will assist you as well.

If you have questions about breastfeeding or are having difficulties after you are discharged from the hospital, please call 341-6808 to set up an appointment with the Highland Hospital lactation consultants.

La Leche League is another resource for breastfeeding women and women who are interested in breastfeeding. More information of La Leche League can be found online at www.lllrochester.weebly.com

VACCINATIONS and MEDICATIONS

In the first hour after the birth of your baby, s/he will be given two medications required by New York State Law: a vitamin K injection and erythromycin ointment in his or her eyes. Hepatitis B vaccine is also offered just after delivery.

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is needed by humans for blood clotting. Without enough vitamin K, small cuts can go on bleeding for a very long time and big bruises can happen from small injuries. Bleeding can also occur in other parts of the body, such as the brain (causing one type of stroke).

Babies have very little vitamin K in their bodies at birth. Vitamin K does not cross the placenta to the developing baby, and the bowel does not have any bacteria to make vitamin K before birth. After birth, there is little vitamin K in breast milk and breastfed babies can be low in vitamin K for several weeks until the normal gut bacteria start making it. Infant formula has added vitamin K, but even formula-fed babies have very low levels of vitamin K for several days.

With low levels of vitamin K, some babies can have very severe bleeding – sometimes into the brain, causing significant brain damage. This bleeding is called hemorrhagic disease of the newborn (HDN). If the Vitamin K injection is given within the first hour of life, the risk of severe bleeding is greatly reduced.

Erythromycin ointment

Many organisms can cause infection in the eyes of newborn infants. The most common bacterial infections with potential to cause serious eye damage are gonorrhea and chlamydia, which can be passed from mother to child during birth. The viruses that cause genital and oral herpes can also cause neonatal eye infections and damage to the eye. These viruses may infect the baby during birth.

The mother may not know she is infected at the time of delivery, yet still have bacteria or viruses capable of causing eye infections in the newborn. Because of the seriousness of newborn eye infection, NYS requires all hospitals to use antibiotic ointment, such as erythromycin, in the newborn's eyes within one hour of birth to prevent disease.

Hepatitis B Vaccine

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that an initial dose of Hepatitis B vaccine be administered to all infants born in the US. The NYS Department of Health has recommended that this dose be given within the first 12 hours of life. Your baby will be still be given 3 Hepatitis B shots as part of her/his immunizations. The Hepatitis B injection offered at the hospital will not replace the series of 3 but will provide some protection against the disease for babies who may not receive their regularly scheduled vaccinations. Just like all other vaccines, you have the right to consent to or decline this vaccine. A Hepatitis B handout is included in this packet. When you arrive at the hospital in labor, you will be asked whether or not you want your baby to have this vaccine.

CIRCUMCISION

If you are having a boy, you may choose to have him circumcised. While we do not recommend the procedure, we are aware that many of our patients desire to have it done for religious, cultural, or social reasons. Information on the pros and cons of circumcision is available in our office. The midwives all use local anesthetic before the circumcision. The procedure is done after 12 hours of life.

Birth Control

In order to space their children, most women use some form of contraception after the baby is born. A summary of the available birth control options is included in this packet. There are some limitations for women who are breastfeeding, so these options are indicated. Discuss any questions with the midwife.

Some women want to be permanently sterilized. If you are considering this please discuss it with your midwife as there may be special requirements depending on your insurance. Information on tubal ligation and vasectomy are available at our office.

After the Baby

Before you leave the hospital, you will receive written self-care guidelines. Once you are home, you are encouraged to call the office or midwife on call with questions or problems, such as a fever, chills, increasing bleeding or severe pain.

About a week after you go home, all breastfeeding moms should receive a telephone call from a Highland Hospital nurse. This is an opportunity for you to ask any questions and for us to hear how you and the baby are doing. Highland Lactation Services also offers a hotline you can call with questions.

It is customary to have an office visit 4-6 weeks after delivery. That visit is ideally scheduled with the midwife who helped you give birth. This visit will include a breast and pelvic exam and possibly testing for STIs. If you have had a cesarean section, we like to see you two weeks after delivery to check your incision.

Postpartum Depression

The first few weeks after the birth of a baby are often very challenging for new mothers. Years ago, the new mother only had to take care of herself while friends and family took care of running the household and care of the other children. We encourage you to arrange for that same kind of help whenever possible. If you need assistance in getting some help, talk to the nurse or midwife.

Some women also feel sad, depressed, irritable, and cry a lot in the first few weeks. These 'baby blues' are caused from changes in hormones, pain, fatigue, and anxiety about the baby. These feelings usually go away after about 2-4 weeks, but getting more rest and getting out of the house for a break from the baby helps. If feelings of sadness, depression and/or anxiety continue longer than one month, or if they are constant and severe for any length of time, you may be suffering from a clinical post-partum depression. Professional counseling and medication may be necessary. Please call the office to talk with a member of our staff if you think you have postpartum depression.

Resources for Childbirth Education

The classes below charge a fee varying from \$20-150. Your insurance may pay for some or all of the cost. Some offer a sliding scale for low-income families. Call to inquire.

Highland Hospital

1000 South Ave
Rochester
473-2229

Strong Memorial Hospital

601 Elmwood Ave
Rochester
275-0096

FF Thompson Hospital

Canadaigua
396-6497

Noyes Memorial Hospital

Dansville
335-4249

United Memorial Medical Center

Batavia
344-5331

Beautiful Birth Choices

681 Winton Rd North Rochester
bbc.com
484-1972

Hypnobirthing

Body, Mind Wellness Assoc
Rochester
425-7415
www.lowstresslife.com

Bradley Method

Healthy Birth of Rochester
Fairport
425-7105
www.healthybirth.net

Lamaz Class with Tamara Albert

Geneseo
243-1515

New Moon Healing Childbirth Class

Rochester
820-6088

Birthright

320 N Washington St.
Rochester
385-2100

Informed Beginnings Natural
Childbirth Classes

Joyfullbirth.net
Rochester/Finger Lakes
398-3008

Healthy Moms offers free childbirth classes for families living in Rochester who have limited incomes.
368-3490
89 Genesee St, Rochester

Resources for Infant Care, Breastfeeding, and Parenting Class

Highland Hospital: 473-2229 or email hhclasses@urmc.rochester.edu
Breastfeeding
Infant Care and CPR

Healthy Start Center: 368-3490
Rochester (you must live in zip code 14605, 14606, 14607, or 14608)
Breastfeeding, nutrition, parent groups, smoking cessation.

American Red Cross: 241-4400
Infant care and infant CPR.

La Leche League
Rochester North, Southeast, Greece, Irondequoit.
Breastfeeding information and support for mothers and mothers-to-be with monthly meetings and telephone help.

Women Infants & Children (WIC)
Breastfeeding classes
Family Bereavement
753-5437

Beautiful Birth Choices
Breastfeeding
Sibling adjustment