

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR OB PROVIDER DURING PREGNANCY



Care During Pregnancy (Prenatal Care)

While you are pregnant, you will go to a provider who takes care of pregnant women. This is called an **OB provider**. At your first pregnancy visit, your provider will:

- Give you a physical exam.
- Tell you the date your baby will most likely be born.
- Study your medical history to look for anything that might affect your pregnancy or your baby.
- Check for any health problems that might be passed down to your baby. This is called **genetic screening**.

Sometime during regular visits, your OB provider will talk to you about what pain medicine you might need during labor and delivery (birth of your baby).

If your OB provider does not find any problems, you will see him or her:

- Every 4 weeks for the first 28 weeks.
- Every 2 or 3 weeks from weeks 28 through 36.
- After 36 weeks, 1 time every week until you have your baby.

If you have any special medical problems, your OB provider may want to see you more often.

Your OB provider will do the following during each visit:

- Weigh you.
- Check your blood pressure.
- Check your urine protein.
- Check your baby's heart rate.
- Check the size of your womb (also called the uterus).
- Check any vaginal bleeding or leaking of fluid you might have.

Care During Labor and Delivery

When you get close to your due date, your OB provider will tell you to watch for signs that your baby is ready to be born. This is called being in **labor**. When you think you have started labor and go to the hospital, they will check your baby's heart rate, your blood pressure and pulse, and your labor pains. These pains are called **labor contractions**.

If you are in labor, you will not be given anything to eat. You may be given water or ice chips. The nurses will do regular vaginal checks while you are in labor. They will also use a special monitor, which will show the baby's heart rate the whole time you are in labor. This machine is called a **fetal monitor**.

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