

The Stork

Delivering information
for your pregnancy and baby



Importance of the postpartum visit with your provider

Why are postpartum visits so important?

Did you know it is extremely important to see your provider for postpartum care? Postpartum visits are essential for your physical and mental well-being as well as ensuring the health of your newborn. Postpartum checkups with an OB-GYN are a key opportunity to make sure you stay healthy. This very important time after delivery is often referred to as the “fourth trimester.” It is a time of recovery after giving birth and the opportunity for your best possible health both now and in the future. Four key reasons why postpartum care is so important:

Recovery:

- ✓ Allows healthcare providers to monitor your recovery physically from childbirth, such as assessing for issues like continued bleeding, pain, infections, blood pressure changes and C-section wound healing.
- ✓ Postpartum care helps confirm your body is returning to its pre-pregnancy state and helps prepare you for future pregnancies.

Emotional and mental well-being:

- ✓ Many women experience what is referred to as the “baby blues” or even postpartum depression and anxiety. Postpartum care includes screening for and addressing these mental health concerns and ensuring you receive timely support and treatment.
- ✓ Early intervention can greatly reduce the risk of long-term mental health issues for both you and your child.

Support for breastfeeding:

- ✓ Postpartum care provides an opportunity to offer guidance and support for breastfeeding, including latching and positioning difficulties.
- ✓ Early breastfeeding support can improve milk supply and your newborn's needed nourishment.

Preventing maternal mortality:

- ✓ A large percentage of pregnancy-related deaths happen in the postpartum period.
- ✓ Early identification and management of complications can be life-saving.

During the weeks after delivery, you may struggle with anxiety, pain, fatigue and other concerns. If you are having a hard time, know that you are not alone. Your OB-GYN can help you with these problems. Don't feel embarrassed asking for help. Care and treatment can make life better for you, your newborn and your entire family.

***Members can receive a \$100 reward for getting a postpartum checkup 7 to 84 days after giving birth. **Doula home visits for members after delivery is also available-**Excludes CHIP Perinate. See your member handbook for more information. Restrictions and limitations may apply.**



Preparing siblings for your new arrival

Getting ready for your new baby is an exciting time that will bring big changes to your family. Your new baby will bring new sounds, new schedules and new ways of coping for everyone in your family-including older brothers and sisters.

Children older than age 5 often have an easier time, as they have started to have experiences and friends outside of your home. Toddlers often have a harder time. Not only do they have to share you, but their environment and their routines are affected. But there are things you can do to help your children adjust:

- ✓ Start talking about your soon-to-be new arrival before the baby arrives. In general, the older the children, the earlier you can bring the subject up.
- ✓ Buy a special baby doll that is your toddler's baby. You can buy this in advance or bring it home with the new baby. A realistic baby doll can give your child a chance to practice holding, diapering and feeding.
- ✓ Let your older children know exactly what they can expect. Talk with your OB-GYN about sibling preparation classes. Visiting you in the hospital can also be very important, if allowed.
- ✓ Be sure your older children aren't ignored by visitors who come to meet the new baby. A small book or toy can help counteract all the gifts for your new baby.
- ✓ If there are any changes planned for your older children, such as changing beds or bedrooms, make these changes before your baby comes home. Don't try to make any big changes (such as potty training) around the time your baby is expected.

Keeping your family routines and rituals, at mealtimes and bedtime for instance, can also help reduce stress for your whole family.

Source: healthlibrary ascensioncaremanagement.com/Search/90,P02696



August is National Breastfeeding Month

Next month is National Breastfeeding Month which aims to raise awareness and support for breastfeeding.

Breastmilk is the perfect food for your baby. It contains just the right amount of nutrients. It's recommended that you breastfeed at least until your baby is 6 months old, then continue to breastfeed while adding solid foods until at least 1 to 2 years old.

Here are some of the reasons that breastfeeding is best for your baby:

- ✓ Compared with formula, the nutrients in breastmilk are better absorbed and used by your baby.
- ✓ Breastmilk has many disease-fighting factors. They help to prevent mild to severe infections and hospitalizations.
- ✓ Breastfed babies have far fewer digestive, lung and ear infections.
- ✓ Breastfed babies have fewer long-term health problems as they grow up. These include diabetes and obesity.

Source: healthlibrary ascensioncaremanagement.com/Search/90,P02636

As a reminder

Dell Children's Health Plan offers value-added services to keep you healthy and safe.

We offer pregnancy classes at no cost to help you prepare for childbirth and to educate and inform you about each trimester, delivery and the postpartum period.

You may choose a live virtual four week series with Any Baby Can such as Ready for Baby: Childbirth Preparation.

Topics include breastfeeding benefits and methods. Register online at anybabycan.org/programs/parenting-classes or call **1-512-454-3743**. Classes are available in English and Spanish.

You can also choose a self-paced online course with Giving Austin Labor Support. To sign up for the self-paced course, members must contact Dell Children's Health Plan by calling **1-512-324-DCHP (3247)** or by emailing DCHPMarketing@ascension.org.

Preparing for your baby: The importance of a birth plan

Before your baby is born, there are many things you've probably been doing like stocking up on diapers, wipes, clothes, blankets and nursery items such as a crib and changing table. You should also consider creating a birth plan leading up to your delivery and immediately following the birth of your baby. This is an important piece of two-way communication between you, your OB-GYN and your health care team.

Why is a birth plan necessary?

Each birth is a unique experience. Creating a birth plan empowers you to become informed of all your options during labor. At the same time, it's a tool to let your OB-GYN and the team caring for you know about your preferences.

Do you need to write your own birth plan?

You don't have to create your birth plan from scratch. Dell Children's Health Plan has an action form on our website that you can complete at your convenience.

Visit dellchildrenshealthplan.com/your-pregnancy. It's recommended that you review your birth plan with your provider during your pregnancy.

What needs to be included in the birth plan?

Although you may have an idea of how you want your baby's birth to be, your choices may not be shared effectively with your health care team if you don't have a birth plan.

Some questions you may answer in your birth plan include:

- ✓ Who do you want present in the delivery room?
- ✓ Do you want to be offered an epidural for pain management?
(This is a type of anesthetic used to reduce pain).
- ✓ Do you want a natural birth and use alternate things for comfort?
- ✓ Do you want to move freely during labor?

After your baby is born, how do you indicate your preferences?

A birth plan doesn't end with the delivery of your new baby. Your care team will want to know how you want your baby to be cared for in the hospital. For example, explain who will cut the umbilical cord, change your baby's first diaper and give your baby his or her first bath.

In addition, your birth plan can say how you wish to feed your baby. Identifying breast milk or formula as a nutritional preference is an important item for your birth plan. Religious or cultural preferences should be included in your birth plan as well.

Remember, your birth plan is tailored to meet your personal wishes. Keep in mind, your health care team may need to depart from your plan to ensure the safest possible delivery. The goal during delivery is to have a healthy mom and a healthy baby. Your birth plan can help communicate your wishes to your care team during one of the most exciting times of your life.

Source: mayoclinichealthsystem.org



To find an OB-GYN provider for yourself use our online provider search tool at bit.ly/DCHP-FindDoc. You can also call **Member Services at 1-855-921-6284 (TTY 7-1-1)** for help. It is also important to find a pediatrician for your baby before the baby is born.

Understanding Chlamydia and getting screened for it

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis. It can be transmitted through vaginal, anal or oral sex. While many people experience no symptoms, chlamydia can cause a variety of symptoms including discharge, burning during urination and pain during sex. If left untreated, chlamydia can lead to serious complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women and infertility in both men and women.

A chlamydia test detects the bacteria that causes chlamydia. This test tells you if you have a chlamydia infection. Your provider takes a sample of urine or secretions from your vagina, penis, rectum or throat and sends it to a lab for testing. Results are usually ready in a day. Avoid sex while waiting for results.

You should get a chlamydia screening if you:

- ✓ Are sexually active, especially if you're under 25
- ✓ Are pregnant
- ✓ Have HIV
- ✓ Know that your partner has a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- ✓ Plan to have sex with a new partner or have more than one partner

A positive test means the lab detected the bacteria that cause chlamydia. This means you have a chlamydia infection and will need treatment with antibiotics. You should notify your sexual partners, so they can get tested too. After finishing treatment, you'll need additional follow-up chlamydia tests. Ask your provider when you should get a follow-up test.

A chlamydia test is essential to limiting the spread of this sexually transmitted infection (STI). It's especially important to get screened for chlamydia regularly if you're at a higher risk of this STI. Untreated, the infection can cause health problems — and you can spread it to your partner(s). While you're waiting for results and during treatment, avoid having sex. Wait until your provider says it's safe to have sex again. Be sure to practice safe sex to avoid getting an STI.

Sources: [cdc.gov/chlamydia/about/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/chlamydia/about/index.html);
my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/22352-chlamydia-test



Our Special Delivery program is here for you

If you need extra help during your pregnancy, Dell Children's Health Plan invites you to join our *Special Delivery* care management program to help you have a healthy pregnancy. If you have a high-risk pregnancy, we connect you to our service coordination team to ensure you get the best care possible during your pregnancy. We help connect you with doctors, resources, education, benefits and value-added services during your pregnancy and the postpartum period.

To learn more, **call 1-512-324-3015 (TTY 7-1-1) or toll free 1-844-964-3015 (TTY 7-1-1).**

Restrictions and limitations may apply. See your member handbook for details.

Upcoming events

On August 4, come see us at Braker Pointe from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for help renewing your Medicaid or CHIP coverage.

On August 12, our next Community Baby Shower with Catholic Charities will take place at San Jose Catholic Church from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

On August 23 the Annual Migrant Education Summit is taking place at the Education Services Center Region 13 from 9:00a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Dell Children's Health Plan offers a \$25 reward for women receiving a chlamydia screening by age 24. STAR members only. See your member handbook for more information. *Restrictions and limitations may apply.*

For more information email us at
dchp-CM@ascension.org