

Professional Care



Read the articles and answer the questions.

Take your temperature and record it on your paper.

Take your blood pressure and record it on your paper.

Take your heart rate and record it on your paper.

Weigh yourself. Recording it is optional.

Examine the ultrasound and note 3 recognizable parts of the fetus.



Is prenatal care important?

Yes! You can help make sure that you and your baby will be healthy by following some simple guidelines and checking in regularly with your doctor.

What will happen during prenatal visits?

Your doctor will probably start by talking to you about your medical history and how you've been feeling. You'll probably be weighed and have your blood pressure taken on every visit.

On your first visit, you'll also probably have a pelvic exam to check the size and shape of your uterus (womb) and a Pap smear to check for signs of cancer of the cervix (the opening of the uterus).

Urine and blood tests may be done on the first visit and again later. Urine tests are done to check for bacteria in your urine, high sugar levels (which can be a sign of diabetes) and high protein levels (which can put you at risk for preeclampsia, a type of high blood pressure in pregnancy). Blood tests are done to check for low iron levels (anemia).

Sometimes, an ultrasound may be done to help figure out when your baby is due or to check on your baby's growth and position in your uterus. Ultrasound uses sound waves to create an image of your baby on a video screen.

Other tests may be needed if you or your baby are at risk for any problems.

Call your doctor if you have:

- Blood or fluid coming from your vagina
- Sudden or extreme swelling of your face or fingers
- Headaches that are severe or won't go away
- Nausea and vomiting that won't go away
- Dizziness
- Dim or blurry vision
- Pain or cramps in your lower abdomen
- Chills or fever
- A change in your baby's movements
- Less urine or burning when you urinate
- Any illness or infection
- Anything that bothers you

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Visits to Doctor

*Once a month for the first 8 months.

*Once a week during ninth month.

A typical visit to the doctor includes – weighing in, a blood sample taken, blood pressure taken, a urine sample, measurement of the mother's stomach, and listening to the baby's heartbeat.

Important Definitions:

Certified Nurse Midwife (CNM) – An RN with extra training, physician backed.

Obstetrician/Gynecologist – A doctor who specializes in women's health.

Family Practitioner – A doctor who works with everyone – babies to the elderly.