

## Preparing For Your Baby FAQ

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) How frequent will my appointments be? The following is a general schedule from the beginning of your pregnancy through your 7th month, a monthly appointment in your 8th month, an appointment every 2 weeks in your 9th month, an appointment weekly

The first office visit you will have with us is an extended visit with our nurse-practitioner, who will take a comprehensive history and do a complete physical examination, including a Pap smear if due, and answer as many questions as you may have. This visit will take approximately 40 minutes.

Thereafter, routine prenatal visits are usually with your primary obstetrician, in which you have your blood pressure, weight, urine and status of your baby checked. Although most visits are with your physician, you will also be seeing each of the other physicians in order to get to know each of them. We make every effort to keep appointments running on time. Unexpected emergencies do arise that we need to address immediately, which may cause delays in our schedule. Please bear with us. If you are going to be late, please call the office so that we can arrange an alternate time.

2) Am I allowed to exercise?

Yes. Exercise is safe in pregnancy. Swimming and walking tend to be more comfortable than higher-impact sports. Avoid contact sports and those activities that have a risk of falling (downhill skiing, in-line skating, horseback riding). There is no need to keep your pulse below a certain number but do be sure to have proper nutrition and lots of fluids.

3) What about my hair care?

You may perm and color your hair during pregnancy as there is no danger to your baby.

4) Can I garden?

Yes, if you feel comfortable doing it. You should wear gloves and wash your hands thoroughly after working with the soil.

5) Can I paint?

Paint fumes are usually not toxic if the area is well-ventilated. Water-based latex paints are acceptable. If you have a question about the type of paint you are using, ask the manufacturer or call us.

6) What if I need dental work?

It is not necessary to delay your dental work until after your pregnancy. If your dentist needs to take x-rays, just be sure to properly shield your abdomen. Local anesthetics, such as Novocain, are safe. If your dentist has any questions, please tell him/her to call us.

7) Am I allowed to travel?

Travel poses no specific risks during pregnancy, but you should take some minor precautions. Use your seat belt throughout your pregnancy. During long trips, take time out to stand and move about. Consider access to obstetrical care and remember to bring a copy of your obstetrical record with you. Travel to remote areas of foreign countries is not recommended. Metal detectors used for airport security are not harmful to the pregnancy. In general, it is preferred that you avoid air travel after 34 weeks.

8) Will I have my own obstetrician delivering my baby when the time comes?

After spending the vast majority of your pregnancy caring for you, your physician would like nothing more than to have the privilege of delivering your baby. However, this is not always possible as we do not control the timing of when you go into labor or deliver. Babies are born 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and this means that Women's Health Associates is always on call. That makes it necessary for us to rotate coverage, and because we do, we want you to feel comfortable with each of the physicians. In order to facilitate this, the prenatal visits are scheduled initially just with your primary physician through approximately 20 weeks. Visits will then alternate between your "primary" and one of the other physicians. It is natural to feel most comfortable with your primary physician, but rest assured that we all share a very similar approach to medical care and have very similar philosophies about labor and delivery. All of us have your best interests at heart.

9) Will I still be able to pet my cat?

Yes, but someone else needs to take care of the cat litter. Remember to wash your hands thoroughly after petting the cat.

10) Is a hot bath safe?

Regular tub baths and showers are perfectly safe during your pregnancy. Avoid hot tubs and saunas, though, as these involve extremely high temperatures that may affect fetal development.

11) How soon will I feel my baby move?

Usually between 17 and 20 weeks, you will be aware of the movements of your baby. Friends may not be able to feel the movement until several weeks later.

12) How often should the baby move?

No two pregnancies are the same with regard to the amount of fetal movement. All babies have times when they are active as well as periods of sleep. You will get to know your baby's normal cycles of activity and quietness, and it is these patterns you should get to know. Any abrupt decline in fetal activity should be reported to your physician. Also, if you have not felt any fetal movement for 12 hours, please notify us.

13) Can I eat fish during my pregnancy?

The Food and Drug Administration recently published an advisory on methyl mercury in fish and recommended that pregnant women not eat swordfish, shark, king mackerel or tilefish. You can safely eat 12 ounces per week of other cooked fish, including shellfish, canned fish, or smaller ocean fish. Eat only wild salmon; farm-raised is not recommended.

14) How much weight can I gain during my pregnancy?

We recommend a weight gain of between 25 and 35 pounds by the end of your pregnancy. The baby will usually weigh between 7 ½ and 8 ½ pounds. The rest of the weight gain is made up of placenta, breasts, fluids and other byproducts of pregnancy. Limiting the weight gain to this amount ensures a speedier return to prepregnancy weight.