

OBSTETRICAL CARE PROGRAM

Family Health Team

Welcome To Your

Third Trimester 3

Information & Frequently Asked Questions

9 months



Toronto Western Hospital

University Health Network



You may be feeling excited and anxious about the approaching arrival of your baby. Dramatic physical changes happen to you, as this is when the baby grows the most. During the third trimester, many women start 'nesting'; setting up and preparing their home for a child.

How often will I be coming to clinic?

At 30-32 weeks, you will start to have regular appointments **every 2 weeks**. For the last month, we will see you **every week**. You may have extra ultrasound appointments if you go more than a week past your due date, or if we need information about baby's size or position.

What special tests are done during this trimester?

GROUP B STREP (GBS) SWAB

A quick and easy swab of your vagina and rectum is done at around **36 weeks** to check for a bacteria called Group B streptococci. You can even do the swab yourself. Although the bacteria is harmless to you, GBS can cause serious infections in newborn babies. If the test is positive for GBS, you will be given intravenous antibiotics during labour.

CERVIX CHECK AND 'STRETCH & SWEEP'

About a week before your due date, we will offer to check your cervix to tell whether your body and baby are getting ready for labour. We can also stretch the cervical opening and 'sweep' the baby's water sac off of your cervix. This may prevent you from going past your due date.

What is happening to my body!?

Physically, the third trimester can be uncomfortable. You may experience some of the following:

- tiredness
- backache
- groin pain and leg cramps
- uncomfortable sex
- heartburn (try to eat small meals; avoid greasy or spicy foods. Avoid lying down after eating, and try Tums®)
- shortness of breath
- frequent urination
- loss of bladder control when you sneeze, cough or laugh
- Braxton-Hicks contractions (false labour)

If you think something is abnormal, please call the OCP nurse at **416 603 5800 ext 2335**

What should I know about 'toxemia' or 'pre-eclampsia'?

This is a condition of high blood pressure and protein in the urine during pregnancy. This is why we check your blood pressure and urine at each visit! Other signs of pre-eclampsia include

changes in your vision, new headaches, pain in the abdomen, and a sudden increase in the swelling of your face, hands or ankles. Because pre-eclampsia can be very dangerous to both you and your baby, if you have any of these symptoms please call the OCP nurse at **416 603 5800 ext 2335**.

Should I be monitoring my baby's movements? What's considered normal?

Keeping track of movement in the third trimester is a safe and easy way to help assess your baby's well being. Generally, you should feel **6 kicks over 2 hours**. As baby grows, his or her space is more cramped so the movements might feel more like rolling than a full kick. They should still continue in the same amount each day. If the movement has decreased:

- Drink a glass of cold juice.
- Relax in a chair with your eyes closed and your hands on your belly
- Pay close attention to the movements

If you are still worried after doing this, please call us or go to triage on the labour floor at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Who will deliver my baby?

Hopefully by now you will have met most of the family doctors who might be on-call for your delivery. If not, we will be inviting you to attend a "**Prenatal Open House**" evening in order to meet everyone. There will also be a resident doctor on-call who will be working with us during your labour and delivery.

How do I write a 'Birth Plan'?

A birth plan should be simple and short; less than one page long. Outline your support people, preferences about pain control, interventions, pushing and delivery along with concerns or fears, infant feeding plans and any other major issues. Tell your labour nurse and us about your birth plan. No one can predict how your labour will progress, so it is important to be flexible. A healthy mother and healthy baby is everyone's ultimate birth plan.

Can I take a tour of the hospital before I go into labour?

Yes. Most women take the tour of the Labour & Delivery unit, the Mother-Baby unit and the Breastfeeding Centre 4 to 6 weeks before their due date. You can schedule an appointment either by phone at **416-586-4800 ext 2307**, or online at:

<http://www.mountsinai.on.ca/care/maternal-infant-program/prenatal-tour-registration>

Who can stay with me during labour and delivery? What about my children?

While on the labour floor, laboring patients are allowed **two support people** in their room at one time (i.e. your partner and mother/sister/etc). There is a lounge where other visitors can wait. If you have other children, you should make arrangements for their care while you are at the hospital.

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What is labour? When should I go to the hospital? What if my water breaks?

You will know that you are in labour when you start to experience painful contractions. For first time mothers, labour may last 12-24 hours, and the contractions may speed up but then slow down again. **Most women will stay at home until their contractions are 4-5 minutes apart for an hour and very painful to the point of having to stop what you are doing.** If you live far away, you should consider traffic and weather conditions when deciding when to come in to hospital. If this is your second baby, be prepared as things may speed up quickly.

It is normal to have light mucous or bloody 'show' at the start of labour. If the bleeding is as heavy as a period, please call the hospital. **If your water breaks** and you are not having contractions:

The Liquid is **clear**, your **GBS is negative**. The baby is **head-down** and **moving normally**:

You do not have to come to the hospital right away. Wait until the contractions are strong and frequent, or call us.

The Liquid is **clear**, your **GBS is positive**. The baby is **head-down** and **moving normally**:

Come to the hospital in 4 hours or call us.

The liquid is **green or yellow-green**, the baby is **breech** or **not moving as well** or if you are having **bleeding like a period**:

Come to the hospital **right away**. It is not an emergency, but we want to ensure your baby has a safe delivery.

Besides the OCP nurse, whom can I call if I am wondering if I should come to the hospital, if I'm not sure I am in labour, or if I have another urgent question?

- Call the Mount Sinai Hospital 'locating' operator at **416-596-4200** anytime day or night and ask to speak with the **Family Medicine Resident on call for Obstetrics**. They should call you back within 10-15 minutes.
- If you have trouble getting hold of the resident and you feel it is an emergency, call the Mount Sinai Labour & Delivery triage (7th floor) directly at **416-586-4800 ext 3210**

Will labour be painful? Can I have an epidural? Should I get an epidural?

Labour is painful, but how you control that pain is a personal choice. Most women at Mount Sinai choose an epidural. There are other options if you can't have an epidural, or don't want one. We will also support you if you choose to have a 'natural' delivery. **Please keep an open mind** either way, as we may make suggestions if we think the safety of your delivery is at stake.

There are always doctors who specialize in epidurals (Anesthesiologists) on-call. You can expect that it will take 30 minutes between when you request the epidural and when you experience pain relief.

How long will I be staying in the hospital?

Women who have a vaginal birth and a healthy baby are typically discharged from Mount Sinai after 1-2 days. If you have a C-section, the stay in hospital is at least 3 days. If trouble with breastfeeding or other concerns develop, you may benefit from staying longer. We can also arrange for a nurse to call or visit you for help and advice after you go home.

What should I plan to bring with me to the hospital?

Pack a hospital bag a few weeks ahead of time so that you will be prepared if you go into labour early. Mount Sinai Hospital can sell you some limited supplies.

FOR YOU

- ☐ Your birth plan and prenatal notes
- ☐ Dressing gown
- ☐ Slippers
- ☐ Socks
- ☐ Massage oil or lotion if you would like to be massaged during your labour
- ☐ Lip balm
- ☐ Things to help you relax or pass the time such as books, magazines, etc.
- ☐ Hair elastics
- ☐ Pillows
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Music; a battery operated machine
- ☐ Nipple cream or ointment

FOR AFTER THE BIRTH

- ☐ A going home outfit
- ☐ Loose, comfortable clothes
- ☐ Nursing bras (2-3)
- ☐ Breast pads
- ☐ Maternity pads
- ☐ Nightshirt or T-shirt (front opening shirts for breastfeeding)
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Towels, hairbrush, toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Old or cheap underwear
- ☐ Ear plugs

FOR THE BIRTH PARTNER

- ☐ Comfortable shoes
- ☐ A change of clothes
- ☐ Watch with a second hand
- ☐ Digital camera and/or camcorder
- ☐ Address book or list of phone numbers
- ☐ Snacks and drinks
- ☐ Things to help you relax or pass the time such as books, magazines, etc.

FOR YOUR BABY

- ☐ A car seat
- ☐ One outfit for the trip home
- ☐ Two or three sleepsuits
- ☐ Baby blanket
- ☐ Diapers
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Diaper cream
- ☐ One pair of socks or booties
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Jacket or snowsuit for winter babies

What about an infant car seat?

By law, you **must use an infant car seat**. Please have a car seat with you at the hospital before you go home even if you are planning to travel by taxi.

We are proud to have been a part of your pregnancy, labour and delivery

We would be so pleased if you could bring in or send us a photo to add to our special collection of Family Health Team babies and families!



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