

Your Prenatal Care



The following prenatal care schedule is an overview of the appointments, screens, and tests that may be offered throughout your pregnancy.

For more information or helpful resources, please scan the QR code or visit: www.espcn.ca/your-prenatal-care.

Your prenatal care is based on your individual needs. Always connect with your healthcare team and/or 811 for any specific questions or concerns about your pregnancy.



First Trimester

Positive Pregnancy Test or
Missed Period-Week 13

- You will go to your **first prenatal appointment**. Your healthcare team will ask questions about your pregnancy, review your medical, immunization, and family health history, and share resources & important information about pregnancy.
- At each appointment your healthcare team may:
 - do a **physical assessment**, including taking your blood pressure and weight.
 - talk about any symptoms you are having.
 - talk about recommended **prenatal bloodwork** and/or an early ultrasound. An early pregnancy ultrasound (also known as a **dating ultrasound**) will let you know your **estimated due date**.
- You may wish to talk about **prenatal genetic screening**, which is optional screening that shows the chance that the baby has a chromosome or birth defect.
- If you choose to do **prenatal genetic screening**, the **blood tests** will be completed along with the **nuchal translucency screening ultrasound** between **11-14 weeks**.
- Start thinking about:
 - where you want to have your baby.
 - who you want to see for your prenatal care (family physician, midwife, or obstetrician).
 - any questions you want to ask your healthcare team.



Second Trimester

Weeks 13-26

- Make appointments with your prenatal care provider **every 4 weeks**, or more often if needed. During these appointments, talk about how you are feeling, share any symptoms, and ask questions.
- Decide on a delivery provider and/or where you want to have your baby. Let your healthcare team know your decision so they can send a **referral letter**, if needed.
- Your healthcare team will continue to share ways to support your health during pregnancy.
- You can expect your healthcare team to measure your uterus (fundal height), listen to the baby's heartbeat with a doppler, and continue to take your blood pressure and weight.
- Between **18-20 weeks**, you will have the **detailed anatomy ultrasound** to look at how the baby is developing. This is often when you can find out the baby's sex if you choose to.
- By **week 20** you will likely start to feel the baby's movements.
- Your chosen delivery provider may take over prenatal care during the second trimester.
- Your healthcare team usually checks for **gestational diabetes** between **24-28 weeks**. If you had diabetes in a previous pregnancy, you may need to do this screening earlier.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

If you are unsure about pregnancy, talk to your healthcare team about your options. Call or search 211 for information on programs and services.

11-14 weeks
Nuchal translucency screening ultrasound (plus blood tests if prenatal genetic screening is chosen)

18-20 weeks
Detailed anatomy ultrasound

13-26 weeks
Prenatal appointments every four weeks, or more often if needed. Your care may be moved to your chosen delivery provider.



Third Trimester

Weeks 26-40+

- Between **27-32 weeks** it is recommended that all pregnant people receive a dose of **Tdap vaccine** (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis).
- **After 30 weeks** you may start to see your prenatal care provider at least **every 2 weeks**, or more often if required.
- You will feel your baby move every day. You may be asked to keep track of baby's movements or do movement counting.
- You will be offered screening for **group B streptococcus (GBS)** between **35-37 weeks**. GBS is a common bacteria found in adults but can affect a baby born vaginally. If the swab is positive, your healthcare team will review your options with you.
- **After week 36** you will see your prenatal care provider **weekly**, or more often if needed, as you get closer to your due date.
- You may go for another ultrasound to check the baby's position and continue to check growth and development.



Postpartum

Up to 6-8 weeks after delivery

- A **public health nurse** may contact you in the **first few days** after delivery and visit you at home or see you at a public health center.
- **Your baby will need to see a health care provider within 1-2 weeks of birth.**
- You will see your delivery provider for a **follow-up appointment(s)** between **2-6 weeks** after your baby is born. You may talk about multiple topics including recovery, return to physical activity, pelvic floor health, birth control, mental health, and adjustment to parenting.
- Ask for help from your healthcare team if you have concerns about feeding your baby.
- You can call the dedicated **Parent and Newborn Line 1-833-805-BABY (2229)** for the first two months with any questions or concerns.

26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

24-28 weeks
Screening for gestational diabetes

27-32 weeks
Recommended to receive a Tdap vaccine

30-36 weeks
Prenatal appointments every two weeks, or more often if needed

35-37 weeks
Group B strep (GBS) screening

36+ weeks
Prenatal appointments weekly, or more often if needed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

First 2 weeks
• Public health nurse will connect with you
• Bring your baby to see a health care provider

2-6 weeks
See your delivery provider for a follow-up appointment

1-8 weeks
Call **1-833-805-BABY (2229)** with any questions or concerns



Key Topics

to consider and talk about with your healthcare team

Important ways to support your health during pregnancy:

- Nutrition as well as foods to avoid
- Physical activity
- Vaccines
- Mental health and mood concerns
- Safety considerations for travel, with pets, and while working
- Review medications, supplements, and herbal products
- How to cut down or quit using substances that impact baby

Genetic screening: You may choose whether to complete **prenatal genetic screening**. You and your healthcare team can decide which option is right for you.

- Maternal blood test and nuchal translucency ultrasound **are covered** by Alberta Health Care.
- Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) **is not covered** by Alberta Health Care.

Options for prenatal care and delivery: You may choose to see a **family physician, midwife, or obstetrician** as your care provider for pregnancy and birth. You will need a referral from your primary care provider for an obstetrician and some family physicians. Midwives offer self-referral through the Alberta Association of Midwives website.

Prenatal classes: There are a variety of prenatal classes available, including one offered by the ESPCN. Explore your options and sign up for one that fits your needs.

Doulas: Doulas provide pregnancy, birth, and postpartum non-medical support. For more information, see the Alberta Doula Association website.

Physical changes and symptoms you may experience: Let your healthcare team know if you are having difficult symptoms during your pregnancy so they can support you. The symptoms you experience can change as your pregnancy progresses.

Emergency situations: Discuss when to seek emergency care with your healthcare team. This may differ based on your health history, stage of pregnancy, and risk factors.

Preparing for baby:

Other considerations may include:

- How you would like to feed your baby and what support or preparation you might need.
- Any other concerns about planning for a newborn, such as work benefits or leave, financial support, and other support systems.

Tips on how to advocate for your care:

From Health Quality Alberta (www.hqa.ca)

- Write down your symptoms, questions, and concerns. Making notes and planning the conversation ahead of time can help you make the most of your appointments.
- Be honest and as straightforward as you can. It is important to be honest with your healthcare team to receive the best possible care.
- Ask questions. You are a partner in your health care. Talk with your healthcare team to gather information before making a decision.
- Ask someone you trust to go with you to your appointment, such as a family member or friend. They can help you ask questions, write down instructions, and remember explanations.

Looking for health information online: There is lots of medical and health-related information available online, but it can be difficult to know what information you can trust. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself when you're looking at information online, whether through a search or AI-generated response:

- Check the sources. Who is the author, and what is their background?
- When was the information published? Is more updated information available?
- Is this information based on facts or personal opinions?

You can also ask your healthcare team for help reviewing information and finding resources you can trust. Here are a few resources that we recommend:

- Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada www.pregnancyinfo.ca
- Healthy Parents Healthy Children www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca
- Canadian Pediatric Society <https://caringforkids.cps.ca>
- Health Education and Learning (HEAL) www.albertahealthservices.ca/heal
- Primary Care Alberta www.primarycarealberta.ca
- 811



More resources are available on the ESPCN website:
www.espcn.ca/your-prenatal-care

My Questions:
