

CAPITAL AREA

— O B / G Y N —



What to expect... Birth & Postpartum Guide

Michael Buckley, M.D.
Katherine Barrett, M.D.
Christin Richardson, M.D.
Paige Gausmann, M.D.

4414 Lake Boone Trail
Suite 308
Raleigh, NC 27607
Office: 919-781-7450
Fax: 919-861-0495

Claire Sellers, M.D.
Jyothi Nannapaneni, M.D.
Maggie Darst, WHNP
Rebecca Daniels, WHNP

1110 S.E. Cary Parkway
Suite 200
Cary, NC 27518
Office: 919-467-2249
Fax: 919-861-0495

www.capitalareaobgyn.com

Revised 11/2021

Thinking Ahead to the Birth of Your Baby

Birth Plan & Preferences

Thinking about your birth preferences can be helpful for you, your partner, your provider and those caring for you and your baby at the hospital. You can often find templates online to assist in writing your birth preferences. Some things you want to consider:

- Who you want with you during your labor and birth
- Any special concerns or cultural preferences you may have
- Special requests at time of birth (cord clamping/cutting, plans for cord blood/placenta)
- Special requests or preferences in the case of a c-section or medical complications

If you decide to write down your birth preferences, please bring it to our office during one of your prenatal visits so you can review it with your provider.

Packing your bag

You will want to have your bags packed and ready before it's time to go to the hospital. In the month before your due date, start considering what you want to bring with you. Here are some suggestions:

- Robe
- Slippers
- Warm socks
- Snacks/drinks for birth partner
- Book/magazine
- Music/playlist
- Focal point objects
- Lip balm
- Nursing tank/bra
- Hair brush, ties, shampoo, soap
- Toothbrush, toothpaste & toiletries
- Nightgown
- Phone charger
- Going home outfit for mom & baby

I think I'm in labor ... I think my water has broken

Give us a call at the office if you think you are in labor or if you think your water has broken. We will ask you to come to the Raleigh office (so you are close to the hospital) to evaluate you during our regular office hours. We will also assess you and the baby if you are having vaginal bleeding or decreased fetal movement. If the office is closed, you will go directly to the OB Emergency Department at the Women's Hospital at Rex to be evaluated.

Your mucus plug may release as labor nears and it may be clear, pink or slightly bloody. This is not necessarily a sign of labor and usually doesn't require treatment. Labor may begin soon after the mucus plug is discharged or one to two weeks later.

When you arrive at the hospital

If your provider finds that you are in labor or your water has broken, you will be admitted to the hospital. At the hospital, your blood will be drawn and the baby monitored. An IV is usually started with active labor and labor induction. This does not necessarily mean you will be attached to a bag of fluid, but IV access is needed in case of emergency. During early labor, you will be able to walk around, change positions, use a birth ball, sit in a rocking chair and do what makes you comfortable. You may also drink fluids, listen to music and watch TV. It is also possible that during early labor, no significant cervical change may occur and we may offer to augment your labor with artificial rupture of membranes or Pitocin. Pitocin is the medicine form of oxytocin, the hormone that causes your contractions.

Active Labor

During active labor, we will do a vaginal exam only as needed, to evaluate progress. Your contractions will be much stronger and your cervix will likely change in dilation. At this point, you may request IV pain medication, epidural anesthesia or continue with natural labor.

Birth

We routinely offer delayed cord clamping and encourage skin to skin contact immediately after birth as long as mom and baby are both doing well. Breastfeeding is encouraged as soon as possible after birth, if you plan to breastfeed. This is the time when baby will be most alert and will spontaneously seek the breast. Latching on and rhythmically sucking will also stimulate your milk supply. Follow the baby's cues and offer time for the baby to attempt to find his way to your breast and self-attach. Baby-led attachment with mom in a semi-reclined position is a great way to start. We recommended delaying the bath for at least 24 hours to assist with maternal-infant bonding and improved breastfeeding.

Cesarean Section

A cesarean section is sometimes necessary to birth your baby. Rex Hospital offers a "Gentle Cesarean" if requested. This is where a clear drape is used in order to see your baby born along with delayed cord clamping and skin-to-skin as soon as able.

Postpartum

You will move to a new room for your postpartum stay and the baby will remain with you as the nurses will provide couplet care. If you find yourself needing some alone time, you can send the baby to the nursery between breast/bottle feedings so that you can get a nap. We encourage rooming in with your baby in order to assist with bonding and breastfeeding. Lactation consultants are available for first time moms, if you are having breastfeeding problems, or upon request.

Circumcision

If you have a son, you may talk with your provider regarding the risks and benefits of circumcision. There are several factors that may be considered in your decision making, including cultural, religious and medical factors. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, there is “potential medical benefits of newborn male circumcision; however, these data are not sufficient to recommend routine neonatal circumcision.” If you choose to have your son circumcised, anesthesia is used and is safe and effective in reducing pain associated with the procedure.

Bringing Home Baby

Rest

Most of our patients go home after 1-2 days after a vaginal birth and 2-3 days after a cesarean birth. Rest is a vital part of your recovery from childbirth. Make sure to nap while baby is sleeping and allow others to help with household chores, meal prep and cooking. Be kind to yourself and communicate with your partner. Ensure that you are eating healthy foods and getting adequate **fluids**. You should keep a glass of water close by at all times, especially when **breastfeeding**. Continue taking your prenatal vitamins until at least 6 weeks postpartum and if you are breastfeeding, continue to take your vitamins until you wean the baby. Plan to wait until after your 6-week visit to resume your prior **exercise** regimen. Getting outside for fresh air and a walk with the baby is encouraged, but listen to your body and don't overdo it.

Pain Relief

For pain relief, ibuprofen is generally most effective and you can take up to 800 mg every 8 hours. If you need additional medication, you can alternate the ibuprofen with acetaminophen 1000 mg every 8 hours. If you were sent home with a narcotic prescription, you may take this with the ibuprofen to assist with pain relief.

Stitches

If you have stitches, they will dissolve on their own and you should keep the area clean. A warm sitz bath 2-3 times a day can be both cleansing and soothing. If you had a **cesarean section**, you should keep your incision clean and dry. When you shower, wash the site gently with warm water and soap, and pat dry afterward.

Vaginal bleeding

Use maxi pads for vaginal bleeding after birth. Do not use tampons or insert anything in the vagina until after your 6-week visit with your provider. Your bleeding will be heavier at first, but will lighten up after the first few days. You may notice a dark red color to pinkish to brownish color. You should notify your provider if you have heavy bleeding like a period filling a pad in an hour or if you pass any clots larger than a golf ball.

Safe Sleep

A safe sleep environment is important to help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Use a firm mattress in a safety-approved crib with a fitted sheet. Do not use pillows, blankets, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area. Keep soft objects, toys and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area. Do not smoke or let anyone smoke around your baby. Make sure nothing covers the baby's head. Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night. Dress your baby in sleep clothing, such as a one-piece sleeper and do not use a blanket. Keep baby's sleep area in the same room where you sleep. If using a pacifier, it should not be attached to a string for naps or at night. Do not let your baby get too hot during sleep. Give your baby plenty of tummy time when he or she is awake and when someone is watching. This will help your baby's head, neck and shoulder muscles get stronger and helps prevent flat spots on the head. Information from NIH Publication Number 12-5759

6-week Postpartum Visit

Remember to call our office and schedule your 2-week incision check if you had a cesarean birth and your 6-week postpartum visit for both cesarean and vaginal births. At this visit, one of the topics we will discuss is birth control options. Remember that you can still get pregnant while breastfeeding or before your period returns. So make sure to use contraception once you are ready to resume intercourse with your partner.

Postpartum Blues

The postpartum blues are common in the first couple weeks after childbirth; but sometimes, this can turn into postpartum depression. Please notify your provider if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Depressed mood or severe mood swings
- Excessive crying
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Loss of appetite or eating more than usual
- Inability to sleep or sleeping too much
- Overwhelming fatigue or loss of energy
- Less pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Intense irritability and anger
- Fear that you're not a good mother
- Hopelessness
- Difficulty bonding with your baby
- Feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt or inadequacy
- Diminished ability to concentrate
- Diminished ability to make decisions
- Restlessness
- Severe anxiety and panic attacks
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

The early days and weeks with a new baby can be quite challenging, but also incredibly rewarding as well. It is helpful to find a community of moms to connect with while you continue to learn about parenthood. There are several **support groups** in the area that you can connect with:

Moms Supporting Moms (Raleigh)
Weekly meetings in several locations
please call for times and locations
919-454-6946
Safechildnc.org/welcome-baby-msm/
mroberts@safechildnc.org

Triangle Doulas of Color
Serving the triangle & surrounding communities
Monthly meetings
540-267-5400
<http://triangledoulasofcolor.com/>

Emerald Doulas Mood Support Group (Durham)
2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 7pm
emeralddoulas.com/pmdsupport/

Coping with Motherhood (Chapel Hill)
1st and 3rd Thursdays 10:30am-12pm
Women's Birth and Wellness Center
NCbirthcenter.org/groups/coping-with-motherhood/
nancy@ncbirthcenter.org

Helpful Resources

Car Seat Inspections at Rex Hospital

919-784-1802 Call before your visit to ensure a technician is on duty

Crib safety

<https://www.cpsc.gov/SafeSleep>

<https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/>

Recommended Reading

Your Pregnancy and Childbirth: Month to Month by American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Nobody Told Me About That: The First Six Weeks by Ginger Breedlove, PhD

What to Expect When You're Expecting by Heidi Murkoff and Sharon Mazel

Ina May's Guide to Childbirth by Ina May Gaskin

Mayo Clinic Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy by Roger Harms and the Mayo Clinic Staff

The Birth Partner by Penny Simpkins

The Expectant Father by Armin Brott and Jennifer Ash

Real Food for Gestational Diabetes by Lily Nichols

Trusted Websites

<https://www.mombaby.org/>

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/>

<https://mothertobaby.org/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/>

<https://www.midwife.org/> (click on Consumers then click on Share with Women)

<https://www.webmd.com/family-pregnancy>

<https://evidencebasedbirth.com/>

<https://www.lamaze.org/>

<https://www.lli.org/>

<https://spinningbabies.com/>

<https://www.hypnobabies.com/>

<https://www.dona.org/>

<https://www.acog.org/patient-resources/faqs>

<https://www.preeclampsia.org/>

<https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/gestational-diabetes>

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/>

<https://www.rexhealth.com/rh/care-treatment/womens-health/maternity-services/>

From UNC Rex Hospital

Financial Aspects of your Care

Before your due date, please call your insurance company to review your maternity coverage.

You may be responsible for any charges not covered by your health insurance. **Please note** that physicians (emergency and OB emergency, pediatricians, anesthesiologists, etc.) and other providers may bill separately. To learn more about how services are billed at UNC REX Healthcare, please visit our [Understanding Your Bill](#) page.

UNC REX Healthcare will assist you with obtaining the necessary approval for your visit and file your insurance claim for you. We are able to file primary and most secondary insurance claims when we have complete and accurate information at the time you are registered. If your insurance requires prior approval for certain tests or for hospital admission, we will help you obtain the necessary approval if your physician has not done so.

To ensure we have complete and accurate insurance information, please bring your insurance card and photo identification at the time you are admitted.

You should [pre-register on our website](#) at least 60 days prior to your delivery. You should receive a confirmation notice within five business days. For questions about registration for delivery at the Women's Center, please call [919-784-3257](tel:919-784-3257).

After delivery, remember to add your baby to your insurance plan so their claim is filed in a timely manner.

We will register the baby to the mother's insurance. If you want your baby to be registered to other insurance, we are able to change this after confirming with that insurance plan the baby has been added as a member.

Discussing payment and financial arrangements during your stay

A member of our Patient Access department will visit your room before discharge to discuss payment and financial arrangements. UNC REX Healthcare will request payment of your estimated amount due during your stay. This may include any estimated amounts due, to include co-pay, co-insurance, deductible, self-pay amounts, or related deposits.

Please note that charges from your physician are billed separately and are not included in hospital charges. This estimate is based on your insurance coverage, along with the average cost of services provided related to your delivery.

Please visit our [Understanding Your Bill](#) page to view all of the independent physician groups currently provide contracted services at UNC REX Healthcare, including anesthesia services and OB Hospitalist services.

Contact Us

Call us at [800-594-8624](tel:800-594-8624) for questions about your UNC REX Healthcare bills or insurance coverage for those bills.

Call us at [919-784-3382](tel:919-784-3382) for an estimate of how much your bill *may* cost.