

What to Expect During Your Prenatal Care

Congratulations on your pregnancy! We at Myrtue Medical are so very pleased that you have chosen our practice to care for you during your pregnancy and delivery of your baby!

Our obstetric patients are followed by one physician, of your choosing, for routine office care and delivery. Please know that while our physician's do their very best to be there for your delivery, occasionally, the situation arises that they may not be available and one of the other delivering physicians may be called to assist in your delivery. Myrtue Medical offers beautiful birthing suites, spacious whirlpool treatment room and a Level 1 nursery to assist our tiniest patients if needed.

Your initial OB visit will be scheduled starting around 10 weeks. Office visits will be scheduled every 4 weeks until 28 weeks, every 2 weeks until 36 weeks and every week after that until delivery. Your due date is figured by the following: if you have regular 28- day cycles, your due date (EDC) is 40 weeks after the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP). Please note that your EDC may be changed based upon your earliest ultrasound per your physician's discretion.

We highly recommend our patients and their partners attend a childbirth prep class. These classes are offered at Myrtue Medical by skilled, experienced childbirth instructors. You can also have most of your teaching done before you even get to the birthing floor. This allows you more time with your new little bundle. Our childbirth prep instructors are Courtney Hensley RN, Shelly Kruse RN BSN and Cara Cacy RN BSN IBCLC.

The following are a few things we would like you to know about your upcoming appointments so that you may plan accordingly.

Amenorrhea visit: An absence of menstruation visit may be scheduled as early as six weeks if you would like confirmation of your pregnancy. A pregnancy test can be done along with discussion of your medications, being healthy for your pregnancy any other questions you may have.

Initial OB visit: This will be your longest visit lasting approximately 1 hour. Your initial visit will include a complete history and physical examination that will include a pap test. Routine laboratory tests will be done which include: complete blood count (CBC), blood type and antibody screen, rubella titer, syphilis test, HIV, hepatitis B, chlamydia, trachomatis, gonorrhea, urinalysis with drug screen and sickle cell (optional for those of African American descent). Other tests may be indicated based on your medical, obstetrical and genetic history.

1st trimester visits (0-12 weeks): These will be scheduled every 4 weeks and only last approximately 10 minutes. They will include blood pressure check, weight, urine sample dipped to check for protein, glucose and ketones, a fundal height, edema (swelling) check and a doppler to check fetal heart tones. Prequel, a blood test that you must be at least 10 weeks gestation, can determine the gender of your baby and test for genetic disorders. Foresight is an additional blood test that can check for inherited conditions if you or your family have risk factors.

2nd trimester visits (13-27 weeks): These will also be scheduled every 4 weeks and last approximately 10 minutes. They will include all the same measurements as stated above. Between 16-18 weeks a MSAFP test will be made optional to you. Between 26-28 weeks a glucose tolerance test will be performed- this will be done at the lab in the clinic and requires you to drink a sugary drink and have your blood sugar checked for gestational diabetes. Even if you have never had diabetes, it can occur during any pregnancy and is a necessary test to ensure fetal safety. Between 16-20 weeks an ultrasound will be done to check fetal growth, gestational age and anatomy. During your 24-week appointment, signs and symptoms of preterm labor will be discussed.

3rd trimester visits (28-40 weeks): These will be scheduled every 2 weeks until 36 weeks and then weekly until 40 weeks. They will include all the same measurements as stated above as well as a hands-on check for fetal position. At your 28-week visit a Rhogam workup will be done for those who have a negative blood type. At your 36- week visit a vaginal swab will be performed to check for group b strep. Your provider will also talk to you about what to expect during labor at this time. If a tubal ligation is requested, this information should be announced between 32-34 weeks for insurance purposes. Your provider may begin pelvic exams to check your cervix beginning at 38 weeks. They will also discuss count the kicks to monitor baby during your third trimester.

Sneak Peeks: Two complimentary ultrasounds are performed throughout your pregnancy. The first one at 15-18 weeks and the second one at 22-26 weeks. These two sneak peeks ultrasounds are for fun and a picture. These are in addition to the two diagnostic ultrasounds you will receive for dating and diagnostic purposes.

Medications: Prenatal vitamins daily. Tylenol may be used for headaches. Try to avoid other medications until you speak with your doctor. A list of "Approved medications" will be provided to you during your initial OB visit. If you are already on a medication for a pre-existing condition, please inform the doctor's office as soon as possible to find out whether you should continue it or discontinue it. Some medications may be dangerous to stop abruptly.

Exercise/activity: You may continue your current exercise regimen if you do not let your pulse exceed 140 beats per minute and you DO NOT push yourself to exhaustion. As you progress in pregnancy a low impact exercise is recommended over a high impact one. Avoid getting over heated, this includes avoiding hot tubs.

Diet: General diet as tolerated, if you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, try 6 small meals a day. Also try eating crackers, tea, Jell-O, and juices and stray away from heavy or spicy foods. Average weight gain during pregnancy is 25-35 pounds depending on your pre-pregnancy weight and you BMI. Your doctor can help you figure out an appropriate goal.

We encourage the involvement of spouses/partners during all prenatal visits, but they should try to come for the initial ultrasound and the 36-week labor talk. Well-behaved siblings are welcome to repeat visits; however, the initial visit and the 36-week visit are much longer, and they may not tolerate the wait.

Your provider along with their nurse will review all of this and more in more depth at your initial appointment. You may bring a list of questions for your doctor to answer so that you are as informed as possible. For any questions or to find out more about our birthing classes you may visit www.myrtuemedical.org and click on maternity services.

We look forward to seeing you. To schedule your appointments please call us at (712)755- 4516 or visit my chart patient portal.

Yours truly,

The Myrtue Medical Obstetric Providers

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