

# LEARNING

for Expectant Families

**These classes are free of charge. Instructors are registered nurses. For more information, please call our friends at Direct Doctors<sup>SM</sup> Plus, 903.416.DOCS (3627).**

## Prepared Childbirth Classes

A two-part class for expectant moms and their birth coaches, prepared childbirth classes cover the basics of a healthy pregnancy, labor and birth. Topics include nutrition and fitness, pregnancy-related anatomy, how to recognize labor, labor breathing techniques, pain relief options, cesarean births and baby care basics. Participants receive a class manual, a new parent packet and a tour of the women and children's center.

Refresher classes for experienced mothers/parents are also available.

## Big Brother/Big Sister Class

Children (and parents) learn what to expect when Mom goes to the hospital and comes home with a new baby. Fun for the whole family. This class includes a tour of the women and children's center. Refreshments are served.

## Breastfeeding Class

The Breastfeeding Class is for first-time expecting moms and for women who have children but never breastfed. Refresher classes are also available.

This class is led by a registered nurse who is certified in maternal-newborn nursing who will cover: basics of breastfeeding, anatomy, positioning, problem-solving and expectations. A breastfeeding guide is provided as well as a recommended reading list.

Yes. We recommend breastfeeding as it gives your newborn a richer diet, boosts your baby's immune system and can help them avert allergies later in life. Talk with us. We understand if you have concerns and we'll do our best to help you make the best decision for you and your baby.

For the comfort of all involved, this is a Mommy-only class.

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[www.texomamedicalcenter.net](http://www.texomamedicalcenter.net)

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# HAZARDS for Expectant Moms

**Some things can put your baby at risk for developmental problems, premature birth, miscarriage, stillbirth and other issues. Pay attention to everything that goes into your body.**

- Don't drink alcohol if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant
- Don't use narcotics such as heroin and cocaine
- Don't smoke marijuana
- Don't take over-the-counter products such as aspirin, cold medicines, nasal sprays, allergy relief items, vitamins or herbal products without your physician's OK
- Stay away from tobacco smoke
- Steer clear of foods with potentially harmful bacteria such as:
  - Raw or undercooked eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish or sprouts (like alfalfa)
  - Soft cheeses
  - Unpasteurized milk or juices
  - Deli meats or hot dogs unless they've been reheated to steaming hot
  - Some cooked seafood is safe, some is not – ask your physician
- Review your prescription medications with your doctor before continuing to take them during your pregnancy
- Watch how much canned tuna you eat and keep it at a minimum
- Keep far from household and garden chemicals such as air fresheners and pesticides – anything easily inhaled
- Avoid X-rays, especially during your first three months

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# { GOOD EATING }

## for Expectant Moms

It's true. You're eating for two. Because everything you put in your mouth and swallow travels into your baby. So even if you're an avid good-nutrition woman, you still might need to alter your diet.

### **Drink water, drink water, drink water.**

It'll help keep your system clean.

### **Supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbs ...)**

It's always best to get your vitamins and minerals from the foods you eat, but if, after consulting your physician, supplements (like calcium or iron) are appropriate for you and your baby, select carefully. Many supplements contain sugars and preservatives. Read labels and then take as directed.

### **Herbal teas**

Just like foods and supplements, herbs affect your baby. Consult your physician. Then select organic or natural teas and you might be able to quiet an upset stomach, sleep better or even have more energy.

### **Gestational diabetes**

Approximately three percent of pregnant women in the United States experience temporary diabetes. If you find yourself experiencing unusual thirst, blurred vision, extraordinary fatigue, excessive urination, it's important to talk to your physician immediately. Most women can control their diabetes through diet and exercise.

### **Calories and food combining**

Watch the fat, salt and sugar content. And it's always helpful for you and your baby to eat as naturally as possible. Prepackaged and restaurant foods are high in sodium, low in nutritional value and contain chemicals and preservatives.

Remember to vary the specific foods within the food groups for maximum nutrition. A good way to judge if you've got a balanced plate in front of you is by color. In other words, put some carrots in your spinach salad.

Eating protein at the same time as a simple carbohydrate (like a potato, bread or pasta) can regulate the flow of sugar into your bloodstream and help keep your energy even.

Foods high in vitamins A & C, like dark leafy green vegetables, help your body absorb and process calcium.

### **If you have a recommended 2,000 calories per day, here's a sample of a daily diet.**

#### **Grains – 6 ounces**

Whole grains are best

#### **Veggies – 2 ½ cups**

Raw and cooked – dark greens; orange squashes or carrots; green beans; black, red and navy beans; chick peas and green peas

#### **Dairy – 3 cups**

Milk, yogurt, cheeses (ricotta, cheddar, cottage cheese, cream cheese ...)

#### **Protein – 5 ½ ounces**

Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts

*Be careful not to eat too much canned tuna as the mercury content becomes concentrated for your baby.*

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# HEALTHCARE

for Expectant Moms

**The moment you suspect you might be pregnant, call your doctor. The sooner you start nurturing the life within you, the better for your baby.**

If you're not pregnant, but would like to try, it's a good idea to see your physician for a general check-up.

If you don't have a primary care physician or a pediatrician, we can help. Call our friends at Direct Doctors<sup>SM</sup> Plus, 903.416.DOCS (3627).

## First tests

- Blood tests to confirm your blood type, Rh factor and iron level
- Check for HBV (hepatitis B virus), STD's (sexually transmitted diseases – some of which can be transmitted to your baby), HIV (the virus that causes AIDS)
- A test to detect immunity to rubella (German measles)

## Later tests

- Blood pressure
- Your weight and heart rate
- Your baby's heart rate
- Pelvic exams
- Screen for diabetes
- Test for group B strep infection

## Periodic check-ups

- Ask your physician for a schedule that's appropriate for you.
- Keep your appointments. Your baby needs you to take care of your body.
- Write down questions and ask, ask, ask.
- Bring your partner or friend or relative to appointments. They'll help you remember important information and you can make a mini-party out of the event.
- Be honest and direct with your physician about any physical or emotional upsets. Your doctor is there to help you when you're pregnant.

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# FITNESS

for Expectant Moms

## Keep moving

Unless you're having complications, keeping active is going to be good for you and your baby. It's recommended that you get moderate physical exercise on a regular basis. Motion will help keep your body's blood circulating well, help keep down water retention and help your muscles stay in shape. Not only will regular exercise benefit your body during pregnancy, it can get your body back to its old self faster after you give birth.

- Avoid movement where the risk of hurting your belly or of falling is high
- Consider special exercises that will help prepare your body for childbirth
- Try walking. It's free, fun and easy to do with a friend or by yourself

Consult your physician before beginning any exercise routine.

## Put your feet up

Your body needs strength – take time to rest. Remember, sleep is when your body renews itself.

## Working

Take breaks. Avoid stress. Stay clear of chemicals and noxious fumes. Talk to your supervisor if your job isn't pregnancy-friendly. And schedule your maternity leave as far in advance as you can.

## Basic body checks

- Shower and bathe as usual. Don't use hot tubs, saunas or take long, hot baths. Avoid douching.
- See your dentist early in your pregnancy.
- Keeping your teeth in good shape will help prevent bacteria or infections in your bloodstream.
- Most women can safely continue to have sex. If you have concerns, talk with your partner.

Wear a seat belt and discuss long trips, especially flying, with your physician.

## Avoid

- Running
- Heavy lifting
- Vacuuming (during your last months)
- Jumping
- Sitting for long periods of time
- Bouncy or excessive dancing

## Indulge

- Walking
- Stretching
- Yoga
- Exercises on the floor
- Exercises while seated
- Arm toning
- Leg, foot, arm and wrist circles
- Moderate dancing
- ... and try an exercise class for pregnant women

For more information on fitness classes at TMC, including water aerobics, please contact the TMC Wellness Program at 903.416.1233.

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# FASHION

## for Expectant Moms

### **Fashion – form and function**

It's nine months of your wardrobe. Save money by purchasing mix and match large women's sizes for your early months and maternity basics for your largest months. And because your body's temperature will rise and fall unpredictably, try layering.

- Definitely invest in well-fitted bras – changing sizes appropriately. You'd do well to investigate a bellyband or other supportive device as it may help your stomach and back muscles.
- Wear low- and flat-heeled shoes. Don't risk falling or putting too much stress on your legs, knees, ankles and feet.
- It takes 800 individual chemicals to make one synthetic fragrance. Steer clear of perfumes. Air-fresheners contain formaldehyde. Avoid them, too.
- Your hair will probably change texture while you're pregnant. It may get curly or get straight. It may become thick or thin. Your hormones are adjusting to the needs of your baby. Be wise when it comes to hair products. Stay away from chemical coloring or perms.

### **Diaper bags**

There are lots of expensive diaper bags on the market. There's no need to go wild. Mostly, you're going to find that a basic tote with a couple of zipper compartments, a plastic lined compartment and the option for hand or shoulder straps will be best. And consider your mate. The more a bag suits him, too, the more he's likely to carry it.

### **Accessories**

The right scarf or necklace can take you from day to evening without having too many different maternity clothes. (However one basic cocktail dress might lift your spirits when you need it most.) Choose big, chunky beads. Or brightly colored scarves. This will keep the attention on you, not your stomach.

### **Jeans**

Anything tight around your waist or that restricts movement is not a good thing for nine months. Your body needs to shift and grow to accommodate your baby.

### **Play around. Have fun.**

A man's white dress shirt can be handsome on you, too. Especially when it's paired with a slim, black skirt, black tights and ballet flats. However, large, sloppy sweaters are going to be best around the house. To keep your spirits up, you're going to want to feel well-dressed.

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# CHANGES

for Expectant Moms

Think about continuing your life but with just a little extra care. Extra thought and a positive attitude will mean the world to you and the health of your developing baby. You're building a family. Take joy. It'll help you keep your baby to full term thereby reducing the risk of birth defects.

- Talk with your health insurance carrier
- Plan for your baby's birth by making shopping lists
- Investigate the birth process and your options
- Keep active
- Take childbirth classes even if this isn't your first child
- Stay close to the people who love you

And if you need help, don't be shy. Call us, day or night.

## Brothers and sisters

If you have other children, make sure to involve them in planning for the new baby. When they feel like part of the process, welcoming a new brother or sister will be fun, not threatening.

## Emotional Health

In addition to being in the middle of a life-changing event, your hormones are changing so you're bound to have waves of all sorts of feelings. Stay close with and open to the people who love you. And if you feel just too overwhelmed or your feelings interfere with your life, talk with a professional to gain some insight and perspective.

### Talking

Be open with your partner and close friends. Discuss concerns, hopes and dreams.

### Anxiety

It's normal to have some mild anxiety about your baby's health and progress. Step back and take a deep breath. Prayer can help. So can keeping a journal.

### Planning ahead

You've got lots of decisions to make, such as are you going to breastfeed? Get advice. Make lists. Keep a calendar. And keep your expectations of what you can accomplish reasonable.

### Socializing

Do it! Have as much fun as you can.

### Childbirth classes

They help. You'll get insight. Learn important birthing techniques. And you'll be able to talk with other expectant moms.

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# { DANGER SIGNALS }

for Expectant Moms

Pregnancy can be complicated by infections, toxemia or other problems. These conditions aren't common, but watch out and call your physician.

## **Vaginal bleeding**

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## **Abdominal pain**

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## **A sudden rush of fluid from your vagina**

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## **Vision problems such as blurring, double vision and seeing spots of light**

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## **Severe vomiting**

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## **Severe headache**

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## **Swelling or puffiness of your face, hands – especially if you also have sudden weight gain**

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## **Chills and/or fever**

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## *Common Discomforts*

### **Frequent urination**

It happens. In the first months, your body's adjusting. In the last months, there's less and less room for your bladder. However, discomfort such as burning could signal an infection and you should talk with your physician immediately.

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### **Constipation**

Your body is processing food in a completely new way so drink plenty of water, eat foods high in fiber (such as raw fruits and vegetables, and bran cereals) and exercise regularly.

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### **Morning sickness**

A lot of women experience nausea and vomiting especially in the first months of pregnancy. And even though it's called "morning sickness," it can happen at any time of the day or night. Soda crackers or dry popcorn can help. Chinese hot and sour soup can calm an upset stomach. So does tea with ginger as a main ingredient. Try to avoid fatty or fried foods.

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