



## **Find a doctor as soon as you know you are pregnant and get regular medical care during pregnancy.**

**Your doctor will keep you updated on important health and safety topics for you and your baby.**

### **Benefits of prenatal care:**

- Seeing a doctor as soon as you find out you are pregnant is best for you and your baby.
- Regular health care checks each month until birth can help you and your baby stay healthy.
- Research shows that prenatal care can help prevent babies from dying in their sleep.



Image source: Texas WIC Program



### **To have the healthiest pregnancy, visit your doctor:**

- About once each month for weeks ten through 28
- Twice a month for weeks 28 through 36
- Weekly for weeks 36 to birth

**If you are 35 years or older, or if you have any other health issue, which puts you or your baby's health at risk for problems, you may need additional visits with your doctor.**

#### **ALSO IN THIS SERIES:**

- Alcohol and Drugs
- Breastfeeding
- Room Sharing
- Smoke- & Vape-Free

### **Let's Talk – Prenatal Care**

Regular health care during pregnancy reduces the risk of SIDS.

For content resources, visit: [dshs.texas.gov/SafeInfantSleep](http://dshs.texas.gov/SafeInfantSleep)

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## ***Family and Caregiver Common Questions***

### ***Why do I need to see the doctor so often when I am pregnant?***

Regular visits with your doctor throughout your pregnancy are very important.

The visits help to keep you and your baby healthy, address any problems early in the pregnancy, and help to prevent problems during delivery.

### ***How do I find a doctor for prenatal care?***

Check with your insurance company to find a doctor. If you do not have insurance **in Texas, call 211** to get help.

To find out about the program in another state:

- Call 800-311-BABY (800-311-2229). This toll-free telephone number will connect you to the health department in your area code.
- For information in Spanish, call 800-504-7081.

Women in every state can get help to pay for medical care during their pregnancies. This prenatal care can help you have a healthy baby.

Programs give medical care, information, advice, and other services important for a healthy pregnancy.

### ***What happens during prenatal visits?***

During the first prenatal visit, you can expect your doctor to:

- Ask about your health history including diseases, operations, or prior pregnancies.
- Ask about your family's health history.
- Do a complete physical exam, including a pelvic exam and Pap test.
- Take your blood and urine for lab work.
- Check your blood pressure, height, and weight.
- Calculate your due date.
- Answer your questions.

Later prenatal visits will probably be shorter. Your doctor will check on your health and make sure the baby is growing as expected. During your other prenatal visits, your doctor will:

- Check your blood pressure.
- Measure your weight gain.
- Measure your abdomen to check your baby's growth (once you begin to show).
- Check your baby's heart rate.

### ***Let's Talk - Circle of Support***

Continue to share safe infant sleep information with parents and caregivers throughout the first year to increase their use of safe sleep practices!

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