Postpartum (After the birth)

The postpartum visit is an opportunity to see your provider, review the birth and discuss any questions or concerns that may have arisen since delivery. It is also an opportunity to show off your new beautiful baby. The postpartum visit normally takes place six weeks after you deliver unless you have a C-section. If you have a C-section, you will need to have your incision checked two weeks after delivery and have your postpartum physical four to six weeks later.

At the postpartum visit, you will have a physical exam as well as a vaginal exam. Your provider will want to ensure that your uterus has returned to its pre-pregnancy state and that any birth trauma to the vaginal canal has healed.

Please call our office at any time with questions regarding breast-feeding your newborn; healing of sutures, bleeding, depression, medications, etc. We may be able to help you over the telephone. If needed, we can schedule an appointment for you prior to your standard postpartum visit, or we can refer you to the proper resource to get you the help you need.

Word of Caution

Everyone will have advice for you. Advice is given with the best of intentions. Be careful. Advice given to a mom is usually individualized and not necessarily universal to all moms. There are also many “old wives’ tales” that are passed along as advice. Always check with our staff regarding your concerns.

Choosing Your Baby’s Provider

You will need to choose a pediatrician or family practitioner prior to giving birth. This physician will be responsible for the care of your baby at the hospital immediately after the baby’s birth. You may want to discuss your choice with your friends and family. If you have questions regarding selecting a pediatrician, St. Peter’s Health Partners offers a variety of pediatric physicians from which to choose for the care of your baby. Many pediatricians welcome the opportunity to meet with you prior to delivery. If you need further assistance finding a pediatrician, call 1-800-125-2227 for a physician referral.

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Insurance, Billing and Collection Policies

We participate in most insurance and HMO plans. To confirm your own coverage, check with your insurance representative. Filing of medical insurance claims is a courtesy we extend to you, but all patient charges are your responsibility. Not all provided services are covered by all insurance plans. You can expect to be billed for all charges that are not covered. If you have special insurance needs, please discuss them with us early in your pregnancy so we can inform you of additional resources that might be available. You may contact our office or the St. Peter’s Hospital Outpatient Billing Department at for questions which may come up.

Medications

Many over-the-counter medications are safe, but please check with us before taking medications while pregnant. Tylenol® is permitted for headaches, but you should tell your nurse or provider if you are experiencing more than an occasional headache. If you are taking prescriptions and request any prescription refills at the time of your office visit.

Telephone Calls

Sometimes you may experience problems that you cannot wait until your next visit. If this happens please consider the following.

- Check to see if your “While Waiting” book answers your questions;
- Jot down notes about your concern. When did it begin? What makes it better? What makes it worse? If you suspect any fever take your temperature;
- Try to call during office hours so your chart is available for reference;
- Try to make the call yourself unless this is impossible;
- When you call, identify yourself and your week of pregnancy;
- Have a pencil and paper handy to jot down any instructions;
- If you are having a medical emergency call 9-1-1 (and inform your provider’s office).

Classes

All mothers-to-be are encouraged to attend prenatal classes with a significant other or support person. To register for classes on exercise, birth preparation, Baby and Me, breast-feeding or any other prenatal course, call the St. Peter’s Hospital Women’s and Children’s Services education office at (518) 525-1888. Or visit the website at www.sphcs.org under calendar events.

Outpatient Billing Department at for questions which may come up.

Office Locations, Hours and Telephone Numbers

Monday – Friday; 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
1240 New Scotland Avenue | Slingerlands, NY 12159
(518) 475-5000

Monday – Friday; 8:30 am – 4 pm
326 South Pearl Street | Albany, NY 12203
(518) 449-0700
www.sphp.com
Welcome to our practice. The upcoming birth of your baby is of utmost importance to you, your family, friends and everyone here at St. Peter’s. We are glad you chose our practice to care for you and your baby. As a group, the physicians and midwives you will see are able to offer more knowledge, experience and options than any one individual. Our physicians and midwives are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

First Office Visit – First Trimester (First three months of your pregnancy)
Your initial obstetrical visit will be with a registered nurse. The nurse will ask you questions about your personal and family health history. You will be given a booklet entitled “While Waiting.” This book will add greatly to your understanding of your pregnancy. It is not designed to replace any instructions you will be given by our staff, but will help you understand and enjoy your pregnancy. Feel free to ask any questions about the topics in this book or other concerns at any visit. At this first visit, the nurse will spend extra time teaching you about nutrition, exercise, fetal growth and development, and other pregnancy issues important to you. This visit will last about 1½ hours.

Second Trimester (Fourth, fifth and sixth month of pregnancy)
15-22 Weeks Pregnant
During this period, if you already had a first trimester screen, we recommend a screening test called the AFR (alpha fetoprotein). This is a screening blood test to aid in the detection of spinal defects. If you did not have a first trimester screen, a quad screen blood test will be offered. Again, these are screening tests to aid in the detection of certain birth defects. These are NOT diagnostic tests and will not guarantee that your baby will be free from birth defects. More information about this test is available in written material that will be provided to you.

First Visit with Your Provider
In addition to having your blood pressure, weight and urine sample checked, you can expect to review your health history and laboratory results with one of the obstetricians or midwives. A physical exam, including breast and pelvic exams, a pap smear for cervical cancer and cervical cultures may be done. Your expected due date will also be discussed. During this visit, your obstetrician or midwife will review your personal obstetric history with you and develop a plan of care that meets your needs. During this visit, (less than 14 weeks), we offer a screening test called a first trimester screen which is a combined ultrasound and blood test to aid in the detection of certain birth defects. This is not a diagnostic test and will not guarantee that your baby will be free from birth defects. More information about this test is available in written material that will be provided to you. Other appointments will be scheduled over the course of your pregnancy to ensure that you meet all of the physicians and midwives within the practice.

Third Trimester (Last three months of your pregnancy)
27-28 Weeks Pregnant
At this time, additional blood testing will be ordered. This will include a glucose test to determine if you have diabetes related to your pregnancy. If your blood type is Rh negative, an antibody screening test will be drawn to determine the need for medication that prevents Rh reaction. An Rh reaction may occur when a baby inherits an Rh positive blood type from its father while the mother has an Rh negative blood type. The baby’s life could be in great danger if the mother’s Rh negative blood attacks the baby’s Rh positive blood. RhoGAM is a substance that prevents this from happening. If you need a RhoGAM it will be given at the office within one week of your test results.

Again, these are screening tests to aid in the detection of certain birth defects. These are NOT diagnostic tests and will not guarantee that your baby will be free from birth defects. More information about this test is available in written material that will be provided to you.

20-22 Weeks Pregnant
An ultrasound will be done to assess fetal anatomy. This simple procedure will give you and your provider the opportunity to view the growth and development of your baby. Enjoy your baby’s first photograph. We encourage you to enroll now in prenatal birth and parent preparation classes, as well as breast feeding classes. Call St. Peter’s Hospital Women’s and Children’s Services education office at (908) 526-1888 to register.

36 Weeks Pregnant
Cultures for beta drip will be obtained at this visit. This is to ensure your baby’s safe and health delivery through the vaginal canal. Your provider and nurse will also instruct you to finalize decisions regarding your delivery, feeding and care of your baby. You should consider:

• A Birth Plan: What kind of birth experience would you like? A birth plan will enable your provider and the staff at the hospital to help you have the most positive experience possible.

• Feeding Your Baby: We hope that you have decided which feeding method you are going to use to nourish your baby. We encourage every expectant mother to consider breast-feeding because it is the best form of nourishment for your baby.

• Circumcision: If you give birth to a boy, you will have to decide if you want him circumcised. This is your choice and will be discussed in detail with you during your prenatal visit. To help you make an informed decision your obstetrician will perform the circumcision, usually the day after delivery.

• Choosing a Pediatrician: Choosing your pediatrician before you deliver is very important. If you have questions regarding selecting a pediatrician, St Peter’s Health Partners Medical Associates offers a pediatric group of physicians available for the care of your baby. Your pediatrician will do a physical exam on your baby after delivery. The pediatrician will then follow up with you and your baby once or twice a week later in the office.

• Family Planning: Prior to your delivery, you should decide which method of family planning you would like to use in the weeks immediately following your baby’s birth. Your provider and nurse will answer all your questions.

40-42 Weeks Pregnant
In uncomplicated pregnancies, your provider may allow you to go 14 days past your estimated due date. If you go past your due date, your provider will order a non-stress test to ensure your baby is doing well. This test is done using a fetal monitor, much like the one that is used while you’re in labor. The test can take approximately 20 minutes or more. An ultrasound, to measure the amount of fluid around the baby, is also done, along with the non-stress test, if you go more than one week overdue. If either of these tests suggests potential complications, your provider may consider inducing labor. If you go 14 days past your due date, an induction will be scheduled.

Your nurse and provider will supply you with information regarding the signs and symptoms of labor. They will also instruct you on when you should notify your provider regarding the symptoms of labor. Please feel free to call to ask any questions. When you think you are in labor, begin timing contractions. When your contractions are five minutes apart and regular, or your water has broken or you are bleeding, please call our office.