



Pregnancy Checklist for Dads-to-Be

Your partner may be the one pregnant, but you are both having a baby. Although the expectant mother does all the hard work, you'll still have an important place in the pregnancy. From now until you hold your new bundle of joy, a lot can happen that you may not be prepared for. It's good to have an idea of how you can be helpful to the mom-to-be. Staying involved not only makes things easier for the mother, but also keeps you from feeling left out.

Keep this checklist handy in the final weeks as you prepare for the big day.

4 weeks before expected due date

- Complete prenatal classes.** Mercy offers a variety of classes to help you prepare for your little one. From labor and birth preparation to CPR classes, we have everything you need.
- Set up the nursery.** As you and your partner are "nesting", now is a good time to put together the nursery. Wash all bedding in a gentle, fragrance-free detergent. Assemble the crib, making it ready for baby's homecoming.
- Install car seat.** According to a 2014 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics, less than 10 percent of new parents install or use car seats correctly. Although most car seats have handy installation instructions, if this is your first time installing, it's best to get your baby's car seat checked out by an expert. Your local police or fire station, baby store or car dealership will do a safety check for you for free.
- Purchase a watch with a second hand.** This will come in handy later on as you help time contractions.

The safety of our patients and caregivers has been, and always will be, our priority. We follow strict standards for disinfecting, required masking for patients, visitors and co-workers, and social distancing.

Please do your part by following these and other CDC guidelines.

3 weeks before expected due date

- Know how to time contractions.** You won't call the doctor until your partner's contractions are consistently 5 minutes apart. To help you prepare, practice with your partner, using your watch, to determine the time between mock contractions.
- Map the route to the hospital; know travel time.** Do a trial run from your home to the hospital, to see how long it'll take. This will help you plan your departure once your partner is in active labor.
- Pack a bag.** She will most likely pack her own bag, but here are some items that should be included:
 - A change of clothes and comfy shoes
 - A going home outfit or baby
 - Music, playing cards, magazines
 - Snacks
 - A list of people to call
 - Electronics (your watch with the second hand, a camera or video camera)
 - Money for coffee and cafeteria food
 - Medications
 - Toiletries
 - Copy of birth plan

2 weeks before expected due date

- Make sure your insurance cards are up-to-date.** Even though your partner has been attending weekly doctor appointments, it can't hurt to make sure all is settled with your insurance company with respect to labor and delivery and hotel overnight accommodations.
- Prepare time off from work.** The baby's mother will need rest immediately following child-birth. Your partner may have only you to help, so it's a good idea to request a week or so off of work, if you can.
- Arrange pet care.** If you have pets, arrange alternate care for when you're at the hospital. Ask a neighbor or family member to care for your pet for at least 2 days.

- Purchase sibling's gift (if applicable).** If you have other children, they may feel a little left out and resentful of a new baby in the home. To ease the transition, some parents give gifts to the siblings from their new brother or sister.
- Arrange for flower delivery.** Let her know you're thinking of her by ordering flowers. Because the big day can be overwhelming, it helps to order your partner's present ahead of time.

1 week before expected due date

- Get cash.** Stop at the bank on your way home for dollar bills or rolls of quarters so you're prepared for the hospital snack machines.
- Know when to call the doctor.** Many women stay at home during early labor. During this time, it's important to know when to call the doctor or midwife. For example, call if your partner:
 - Has any vaginal bleeding
 - Has severe pain in her belly or pelvis, or a sudden release of fluid
 - Has had regular contractions for an hour; this means about 4 or more in 20 minutes, or about 8 or more in 1 hour
 - Has low back pain or pelvic pressure that does not go away