

Congratulations and Welcome!

This is an exciting (and sometimes nerve-wracking) time. Whether this is your first, second, or last time being pregnant, our team is here to help you. We are committed to serving you to the highest standards of our profession. Our staff is ready to listen to your concerns and answer your questions. Our goal is to provide quality care that surpasses your expectations. We employ a wonderful team of skilled healthcare professionals committed to providing personalized, high quality care. Please save this handout for further reference during your pregnancy.

Beginning at 8 weeks, our providers will see you monthly during your pregnancy until about 30 weeks of gestation, then we will see you every 2-3 weeks until about 36 weeks. After 36 weeks, you will need to be seen weekly until you deliver. This may change depending on issues that may arise during your pregnancy, this usually means you will come to see us more often.

We encourage you to be an active participant in your prenatal care and involve your partner and family. We too will strive to build a partnership with you to help guide you through this life changing experience.

Your first visit will be very informative and we will provide you with

handouts and resources for you to refer to throughout your pregnancy. Please keep these available as there are many useful pieces of information that can help answer questions when our staff is not available.

We do have an answering service outside of normal business hours that you are free to call with any questions or concerns. We will do our best to answer your questions in a timely fashion. Please save non-urgent questions for your appointment, or call during business hours. Calling our office after business hours will automatically connect you to the answering service.

- **Christy South, MD**
OB/GYN
- **John Houghton, DO**
OB/GYN

Thank you and welcome to our practice! We are honored you chose us to guide you through your pregnancy.

—Mat-Su Women's Health Specialist Staff

Overview of Your Prenatal Care

Your First Trimester

During your first appointment, we have to do many things. You will have a physical exam including a pelvic exam, and the provider will go through your medical history with you. You will usually have an ultrasound at this appointment to help determine an accurate due date.

You will also have your blood drawn to determine your blood type, screen for anemia or rule out chronic disease. This visit is also very informative and includes teaching that can help you grow a healthy baby. We also offer you genetic testing in your first and/or second trimester. This testing is optional.

After this appointment, we will see you every month or every 4 weeks until you are 28 weeks, or your third trimester.

Your Second Trimester

We will see you every month during this trimester. Around 20 weeks we recommend you have another ultrasound to look at how well the baby is growing and make sure all your baby's organs are developing normally. This is often the most exciting ultrasound because this is when you find out if you will be welcoming a baby boy or a baby girl into your family!

Towards the end of the second trimester we also screen for gestational diabetes, this is usually done between 24-28 weeks. We often do this around 28 weeks so that we can also repeat some of your labs to make sure your body is doing what it needs to do to grow a healthy baby.

Your Third Trimester

In the third trimester, we do not usually need to do as many tests as long as your pregnancy is progressing normally, however we do have you come every 2 weeks after 28 weeks and every week after 36 weeks. We will collect a vaginal/rectal culture for Group B Strep between 35-37 weeks.

It is important to keep your prenatal appointments so that we can evaluate how well your pregnancy is progressing and screen for diseases in pregnancy that may pose problems later on.

If needed, we may refer you to a Perinatologist (high risk pregnancy specialist) for a consultation and possible co-management. Examples of this would be high blood pressure, kidney disease and diabetes, among others.

Delivery Information

Our delivering providers are Dr. Christy South and Dr. John Houghton. We deliver babies at Mat-Su Regional Medical Center (MSRMC) located at 2500 S. Woodworth Loop in Palmer. **The hospital's main phone number is 907-861-6000. You may also reach Labor & Delivery at 907-861-6645.**

We hope to share in the experience of welcoming your new baby, however, we also value a healthy work-life balance for our own families and this means we cannot always guarantee we will be there when you are delivering your baby.

We rotate on-call coverage during the week and on weekends between the providers in our office, and we share evening and weekend on-call

coverage with other community medical providers on the staff of Mat-Su Regional Medical Center. This means that one of these other medical providers may attend to your emergency needs or delivery.

Urgent Contact Information

If you have an urgent issue that occurs after hours and needs immediate attention, call the office. Our answering service is always available to connect you with the on-call medical provider. Please save non-urgent questions for office hours.

If you have a non-emergent question or problem, please call the office to speak to a nurse. In order to get back to you in a timely manner, please call before 2 p.m.

Reasons to notify us or head to MSRMC Labor & Delivery:

- Vaginal Bleeding
- Serious falls or motor vehicle accidents
- Absent or markedly reduced fetal movements after 28 weeks
- Fever of 100.4 or above
- Leakage of fluid before 37 weeks
- Any other unusual symptoms that concern you

If you are 22 weeks or more you need to go directly to Labor & Delivery on the back side of the hospital.

If you are LESS than 22 weeks please go to the emergency department.

Mat-Su Women's Health Specialists
(907) 746-7747

If you have an EMERGENCY, please go directly to Mat-Su Regional Medical Center or call 9-1-1 for an ambulance.



Marijuana and Your Baby

Breastfeeding is the natural and preferred way to feed your baby. It provides benefits to mother and child and should be the optimal feeding choice for most infants. Breastmilk contains appropriate amounts of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals, and vitamins. Moreover, breastfeeding helps bonding between mother and child. Marijuana exposure while breastfeeding is not recommended. When a breastfeeding mother uses marijuana, THC (the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana) passes through the breast milk to the baby, potentially affecting the baby.

Overview

When used during pregnancy or while breastfeeding, marijuana may interfere with your baby's brain development because their brains are growing rapidly during this time.

Some of the potential long-term health effects to babies who are exposed to marijuana during pregnancy or while breastfeeding include the following: decreased growth, decreased IQ scores, decreased mental function, decreased academic ability, and attention problems.

Marijuana smoke contains more than 150 chemical compounds, many of the same chemicals as tobacco, some of which can cause cancer. Once in your blood, many of these chemicals can be passed to your unborn or breastfeeding baby.

Marijuana and Pregnancy

No matter how you use marijuana while pregnant (e.g., smoking, vaping, eating), the drug enters your blood and then passes to your baby.

It is not recommended that you use marijuana to treat morning sickness or nausea; your health care provider can give you medicines that are safe to take during pregnancy.

Marijuana and Breastfeeding

According to a 1982 study, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient in marijuana, is excreted into human breast milk in moderate amounts. Based on their findings, 0.8 percent of the weight-adjusted maternal intake of one joint or comparable consumable would be ingested by an infant in one feeding after smoking or consuming marijuana.

Since infants exposed to marijuana via breast milk may show signs of sedation, reduced muscular tone, and poor sucking, your baby may have trouble nursing if your breast milk has marijuana in it.

What You Can Do

- Avoid using marijuana while you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to become pregnant. If you are using marijuana, or other drugs, including alcohol, be sure to protect yourself from an unplanned pregnancy.
- Talk to your health care provider if you are pregnant or breastfeeding and need help quitting marijuana.
- Never allow anyone to smoke marijuana near your children.
- Never allow anyone who is under the influence of marijuana to take care of your children.
- If you have marijuana in your home, make sure it is stored in a locked area that is out of reach of children.