

# The Expectant Parents' Checklist

You are about to welcome a new baby into the world. If you have never done this before, it is time to get prepared. This handy checklist has many important details you should consider before your baby is born.

## Choosing a Doctor

Select a doctor with whom you feel comfortable; he or she will be monitoring your health and the baby's condition during the pregnancy, as well as supervising labor and delivery. You usually can find a good doctor by word of mouth: ask friends and family for recommendations. Make sure your doctor is on the list of physicians approved by your health insurance company.

When you interview a potential doctor, ask these questions:

1. How long have you been in practice, and how long have you been delivering babies? How many babies have you delivered?
2. What is your educational background?
3. Do you participate in my insurance plan?
4. What costs will my insurance cover?
5. What will be my out-of-pocket cost?
6. Are you affiliated with a hospital that participates in my insurance plan?
7. Can I deliver the baby at this hospital?
8. Do you support home births?
9. Will you be delivering my baby, or will it be someone else in your practice?
10. How do you handle prenatal visits?
11. Where do you practice? Who is on your staff?
12. What are your office hours?
13. How do we contact you in an emergency?
14. How often will I need to see you?
15. What will occur during prenatal visits?
16. Have you had any malpractice or licensure problems?

## Tips for Parents

- Visit your doctor regularly. Trust your instincts: if you feel something is wrong, call your doctor immediately.
- Talk to your doctor about what is safe. He or she can recommend appropriate exercises, foods and medications that are safe for you and your baby.
- Adopt a healthy lifestyle. While pregnant, secondhand smoke is especially unhealthy for mothers and unborn children. Avoid smoking or being around people who smoke, and abstain from drinking alcohol and taking drugs your doctor has not approved.

- Educate yourself on pregnancy, delivery and parenting. Take a Lamaze or other birthing class, read books on baby care and parenting and ask your doctor for patient literature.
- Consider talking to a genetic counselor. If either parent has a family history of genetic problems or an inherited disease, find out about possible risks to your baby and options to reduce those risks.
- Budget and save your money wisely. The average first-year expenditure for a newborn child is estimated at roughly \$10,000, not including the costs of labor, delivery and child care. It is never too early to start college savings; take advantage of opportunities offered through long-term investing.

## Preparing Your Home for Baby

You will need new items and supplies to prepare for your baby's first few months.

The basic items you will need include:

- Nursing bras
- Several four and eight-ounce bottles with nipples, rings and nipple caps
- A breast pump (electric, battery or hand-operated) if you plan on breastfeeding
- A diaper bag
- A high chair
- A front carrying pack (with support for the infant's head)
- A stroller or carriage
- An infant seat
- A baby car seat, which should be placed in the back seat with the infant facing the rear of the car; never place it in the front seat, especially when an airbag is in use

You will need the following diaper, grooming and medicine items:

- A week's supply of diapers (infants can soil 10 to 13 a day!)
- Baby wipes
- Diaper ointment
- Baby powder and oil
- "No tears" liquid baby soap and shampoo
- A baby thermometer
- Petroleum jelly and rubbing alcohol (to lubricate and clean the thermometer)
- Sterile cotton balls
- Baby nail clippers
- A baby brush and comb
- A baby tub
- An ear and nose syringe
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Baby liquid pain reliever and decongestant
- A first-aid kit, including ipecac syrup to induce vomiting if poison is ingested

Prepare a wardrobe of the following baby clothes:

- Outfits
- Undershirts

- Sleepers and drawstring bottom nightgowns
- Washable bibs
- Socks, booties and baby shoes
- Summer and winter hats
- A jacket and snowsuit

Finally, outfit your nursery with these items:

- A bassinet
- A baby crib and mattress
- Felt-backed waterproof mattress pads
- Crib sheets and blankets
- Cotton receiving blankets
- A baby monitor
- A changing station
- An infant swing
- Toys designated as safe for newborns (e.g., soft blocks, large plastic rings and rattles)

Because infants grow so quickly, it is easy to find clothes, toys and other items at garage sales and secondhand stores. Make sure any used items meet current safety requirements: for instance, the space between slats in older baby cribs is often too wide to be considered safe. For information on safety recalls of baby and other products, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

## Ten Issues to Discuss Before the Birth

1. Where do you want to deliver your baby: in a hospital, birthing center or at home?
2. If it is a boy, should he be circumcised?
3. Will you breastfeed or bottle-feed your baby?
4. How much parental leave does each parent plan on taking from work?
5. Will you need to hire a child-care provider or nanny?
6. How will you divide the new responsibilities?
7. In what faith will you raise your child?
8. How will you discipline your child?
9. Should you increase your life insurance coverage?
10. Should you create a special fund or college savings/investment plan for your child?

Many pregnancy care items and procedures are fully covered under health insurance plans. Visit [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) for a comprehensive list: <https://www.healthcare.gov/preventive-care-women/>.

Here when you need us.

Call: 844-207-5465

Online: [guidanceresources.com](http://guidanceresources.com)

App: GuidanceNow<sup>SM</sup>

Web ID: LivingME

---

©2025 ComPsych® Corporation. All rights reserved. This information is for educational purposes only. It is always important to consult with the appropriate professional on financial, medical, legal, behavioral or other issues. As you read this information, it is your responsibility to make sure that the facts and ideas apply to your situation.