

YOUR PREGNANCY MATTERS

Becoming a parent is a great adventure! There's a lot to learn, understand, and experience during pregnancy. Throughout this period, your body will undergo many changes, and it's important to safeguard your health.

Under the NHI Bahamas program, you can start receiving prenatal care as soon as you suspect or know you're pregnant.

REGULAR VISITS WITH YOUR NHI PROVIDER

Your provider will monitor the pregnancy through regular visits and administer required lab tests. Providers will update the Electronic Health Record on your medical history, allergies and medications to set your pregnancy off to a healthy start.

A healthcare professional will also calculate your due date and provide lots of information about what to anticipate during pregnancy.

UNDER YOUR NHI PLAN

You can expect to have about **8 visits** with your physician during pregnancy, as well as **1 postnatal** checkup.

While you're pregnant, you will also be asked to complete some routine tests. Some tests are suggested for all women, such as blood work to check for anemia, your blood type, and HIV. Other tests might be offered based on your age, personal or family health history, your ethnic background, based on the results of tests you have previously had.



DISCOVERING YOUR PREGNANCY

During this visit your Primary Care Provider will request a pregnancy test, or, early ultrasound to confirm your pregnancy. Once confirmed, some blood work, prescribe prenatal vitamins, and make sure you have everything you need for the journey.

Contact your NHI physician as soon as possible to schedule your first prenatal appointment. If you don't have a preferred healthcare professional, look into getting one ASAP. Ask friends or family for recommendations and enroll in NHI to be paired with a physician of your choosing.

HERE IS WHY ANTENATAL VISITS ARE NECESSARY

Antenatal care aims to make sure that pregnancy causes no harm to the mother and to keep the developing baby healthy. Pregnancy is a crucial time to promote healthy behaviors and ensure that the baby is getting all the nutrients needed for proper growth and development. It is also an opportunity to evaluate health risks for mother and baby and provide early detection and treatment if problems exist.

Patients identified as high-risk will be referred to an NHI Obstetrician for prenatal care for the remainder of the pregnancy.

You are also entitled to the following Lab Tests:

- Pregnancy test
- Group B Strep
- Hepatitis B
- DRL
- Sickle Cell Screening
- Urinalysis
- Glucose

Ask your provider about vaccines that can be given during pregnancy.

- TDAP
- Influenza
- Covid-19



WHY DO BABY'S MOVEMENTS MATTER?



Feeling regular movements is a sign that your baby is well. Monitor your baby's movements and get to know who your baby is. A reduction or a sudden increase in a baby's movements can sometimes be an important warning sign that a baby is unwell.

WHY DOES MY SLEEP MATTER?



Sleeping on your side during pregnancy is thought to maximize blood flow and oxygen to your growing baby. Research shows that from about 28 weeks pregnant, you should start going to sleep on your side, and either side is fine. If you wake up on your back, just roll over onto your side again.

CAN I HAVE AN OCCASIONAL DRINK WITHOUT HARMING MY BABY?



There is no known "safe" level of alcohol intake for pregnant women.



SHOULD I EAT MORE SINCE I AM EATING FOR TWO?

Pregnant women need only about 300 extra calories per day. Gaining too much weight during pregnancy increases the risk for short and long-term health problems.



CAN I HAVE CAFFEINE WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Although there are no congenital disabilities shown with caffeine use, the risk of miscarriage and fertility issues has been refuted. However, it is recommended that caffeine consumption be limited as it is a stimulant and a diuretic. Drinking excessive amounts can cause heart palpitations.



CAN EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY HARM THE BABY OR CAUSE PREMATURE LABOUR?

Regular exercise during pregnancy has many benefits, including physical benefits, the prevention of excessive weight gain, and psychological well-being. However, activities that may cause falls or impact the abdomen (contact sports) should be avoided.

WILL SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY MAKE MY BABY SMALLER?



Women should not smoke during pregnancy. Smoking is not only harmful to your health but is associated with early pregnancy loss, bleeding from the placenta (placenta abruption), prematurity, low birth weight, and stillbirth. Women who smoke are more likely to give birth to small babies; however, these babies are more vulnerable to breathing problems, infections, and other health issues.

WHAT ARE WARNING SIGNS THAT SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY?



- Fever -100.4 degrees F or above
- Increased pain in the abdomen or cesarean section incision
- Swelling or discharge from the C-section/episiotomy
- Passing plum-sized clots
- Cracked, bleeding nipples
- Tender, reddened breasts
- Burning during urination



Providers will require an ultrasound throughout the course of the pregnancy. At this time, Beneficiaries will be required to pay out-of-pocket for this service.

Beneficiaries may choose to deliver publicly or privately (delivery not covered by NHI).

- Beneficiaries who opt to deliver within the public system (e.g., PMH) should be transferred to a community clinic between 32-36 weeks or earlier, depending on risk level and island of residence.
- Beneficiaries who opt to deliver privately must make separate arrangements with their physician.

Infants are also eligible for Primary Care visits upon registration/enrollment.

It's important to remember that every baby and every pregnancy is different. Contact your provider if you feel uneasy or have any questions.



USE CAMERA TO VIEW OBGYN & LAB LISTING

If your current NHI doctor does not cover prenatal care, please request a referral to an OBGYN within the NHI network to receive care.

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National Health Insurance Authority

The Expectant Mother's Journey
A Guide To Navigating Your Prenatal Experience