

HEALTHY MOM Tips for Self-Care in the Third Trimester



There's still much for mom to do for herself while anticipating baby's arrival. Keeping appointments, getting any special medicine you may need, and learning the signs of "true" labor – along with resting while you're able – can help you feel good and ready when the day is here.

You and Your Care Team

Keep all prenatal appointments and have all tests ordered by your doctor. Appointments will be every two weeks until week 36 and then weekly until you deliver. (This may vary if you have special medical concerns.)

Need to change an appointment? Call your provider's office at least 24 hours in advance to reschedule.

LEARNING WHAT TO EXPECT

The early third trimester may bring your last chance to sign up for a childbirth education class – but any time before labor is fine for you to attend.

Redeemer Health offers a relaxed atmosphere for moms and support people to get answers to questions about labor and delivery and help make an easier transition to life with baby.

Classes include a review of the labor and birth processes, including breathing and relaxation tips. For

those who have previously given birth, a refresher class offers a brief review of the labor process and comfort measures.

Redeemer Health also offers instruction in breastfeeding, infant care and CPR, and special sessions for siblings-to-be.

Sign up as early as possible for a class. Ask your care team for details.

FINDING A HEALTHY BALANCE

Yes: Take an active role in labor and baby's birth. Ask questions, read and learn as much as possible about the birth process so that you can **feel satisfaction and joy** within the birth itself.

But scouring the internet and reading constantly about labor, birth and parenting can lead to too much of a sense of control. Seek a healthy balance of knowledge and information. Remember to trust your instincts!

Special Medicines

In the early third trimester you'll work with your provider to ensure you'll have the medicine you and baby need to stay protected during and after delivery.



VACCINES TO BOOST IMMUNITY

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommend women who are or will be pregnant during influenza (flu) season receive an inactivated flu vaccine as soon as it is available. Ideally, the vaccine should be given by the end of October, but

it can be given to all pregnant women during any trimester.

Your provider will also vaccinate you against pertussis (whooping cough). The CDC recommends all women receive a Tdap vaccine between weeks 27-36 of each pregnancy, preferably during the earlier part of this time.

PROTECTION FOR Rh NEGATIVE MOMS

If you are Rh negative, based on your lab tests you may need to take RhoGAM at approximately week 28 of pregnancy. If you receive it at the right time, RhoGAM will prevent your immune system from reacting to your baby's blood.



"True" vs. "False" Labor.....

"False" labor **usually** involves less regular and milder contractions than "true" labor.

Time your contractions. Note whether they continue when you rest and drink water. If rest and hydration make them go away, they are not true labor contractions.

To help keep calm in the time leading up to delivery, know the difference between signs of true labor and false labor:

- timing and frequency of contractions
- change with movement
- strength of contractions
- location of pain

Sometimes the only way to tell the difference is to have your provider do a vaginal exam to find the changes in your cervix that signal the start of true labor.

KNOW THE SIGNS!

True Labor Contractions	False Labor Contractions
Come at regular intervals and have a pattern. Over time they get closer together. Each lasts about 60-90 seconds.	Do not have a pattern and do not come closer together over time. (Known as Braxton Hicks contractions.)
Continue even when you rest or walk around.	Stop when you walk or rest. May stop if you change position.
Steadily get stronger.	Begin weak and do not get much stronger, or start strong and then weaken.
Pain usually starts in the back and moves to the front.	Pain usually is only in the front.

Ask your care team when to call, when to go to the hospital and where to go when you arrive there.

Good Nutrition for a Healthy Start.....

Try to include more iron in your diet during the last trimester to supplement baby's increasing demands on your body. Foods rich in iron include:

- red meat, pork and poultry
- seafood
- beans and peas
- dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach
- dried fruit, such as raisins and apricots
- iron-fortified cereal, bread and pasta

And be sure to have at least 8-12 cups (64-96 oz.) of water every day! Staying well hydrated helps guard against preterm labor.

A LITTLE PLANNING, A LITTLE HELP

Think ahead and purchase items that will be easy to prepare during baby's first weeks. Freeze some meals so that you may have something on hand for "one of those days" when you feel a little overwhelmed.

Accept any meals from family or friends that can make life a little easier during the last few weeks of pregnancy and the first few weeks after delivery.

Redeemer Health's "Nutrition Guidelines for Pregnancy" can help you maintain a healthy diet even after you deliver. *Have a look before you shop.*

Being Comfortable in Your Body.....

While it's important to listen to your body and rest when needed, it's equally important to maintain a healthy level of activity. Try to get out to move at least three times a week. Most common activities are OK to continue while pregnant.

RELAX WHILE YOU CAN

Enjoy this special time with your partner so that you'll be ready to take good care of your new baby. Relaxation benefits mom throughout pregnancy and during the first weeks and months home with a newborn. But relaxation is a learned response, so we

need to work on it. Try to set aside time each day to release tension physically and emotionally. Close your eyes, take a breath and let go.

MASSAGE DURING AND AFTER DELIVERY

Blissful Beginnings & Beyond at Redeemer Health offers support from licensed massage professionals throughout your labor, and afterward in your room. Special services are available for partners too!

Plan ahead! Ask your health care team for details about Blissful Beginnings & Beyond.



You can find more information about all stages of pregnancy at redeemberbaby.com.

