



THE ULTIMATE ATLANTA
PREGNANCY GUIDEBOOK
SIMPLE STEPS TO YOUR
HEALTHIEST PREGNANCY

DR. SAMAIRA DUMPSON
PRENATAL AND PEDIATRIC CHIROPRACTOR

**THE ULTIMATE
ATLANTA
PREGNANCY
GUIDEBOOK:
SIMPLE STEPS TO
YOUR HEALTHIEST
PREGNANCY**

MUST HAVE PRACTITIONERS

OB/GYN

- Chiropractor
- Midwife
- Doula
- Massage therapist
- Nutritionist

DIET AND NUTRITION

- Vitamins and supplements
- Proper diet
- Cravings

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Benefits
- Prenatal Yoga

BIRTH OPTIONS AND LOCATIONS

- Home Birth
- Hospital Birth
- Birth Centers

ULTRASOUNDS

- Why? When? How many?

BIRTH PLAN

MUST HAVE PRACTITIONERS

Pregnancy and the birth experience is best when it becomes a team effort. Your birth team is a vital component of a healthy pregnancy journey. Your team can be customized to your needs and birth plan desires. Team members include personal support (spouse, family, etc) and practitioners. The focus of the team of health care providers is to ensure optimal well being of mother, baby, and family. There are many options in Atlanta to consider what practitioners to include on your team. Thankfully there are plenty of options; however, the birth team draft selection can be overwhelming. Understanding the roles, benefits, and purpose of each practitioner can help in the decision process. Ahead, is a quick guide on who and what to expect during your birth, along with key qualities to assess when adding to your birth team.

OBSTETRICIAN

An Obstetrician (OB) is a medical doctor who specializes in pregnancy, childbirth, and surgical procedures, such as cesarean sections. OBs are highly trained in the management of the female reproductive system, gynecological related conditions, and surgical care. Extended training and education of OBs can be obtained for further specialities including perinatology and maternal-fetal specialities. A Perinatologist such as Dr. Bootstaylor, monitor the wellbeing of mother and baby in labeled high risks pregnancies or when complications arise. OB work in coordination with a Perinatologist or will refer to one if medically necessary. Traditionally, OBs have been the primary practitioner throughout pregnancy. However, the integration of midwifery and doulas have recently increased, expanding the options of the birth team. When deciding on an OB, feedback from those you trust and know is always helpful, also consider the following questions:

- **Education:** What specialization or extended training do you have? This is vital if you have been labeled “high risk” and may need a Perinatologist.
- **Experience:** How long have you been in practice? Approximately how many births have you delivered? How many vaginal births? What is your cesarean rate?
- **Cost:** Are you in network or out of network with my insurance? Do you have cash option plans?
- **Availability:** Who will be on call if you are not available for my birth? Will I be able to meet the backup OB?

- **Philosophy:** What is your philosophy on the birth experience?
- **Birth Plan:** Here is my birth plan, are you willing to follow for my desired birth?
- **Location:** What locations are you able to deliver?
- **Vaccinations:** If I decided to opt out of prenatal vaccines, would you be in support?
- **Ultrasounds:** If I decided to opt out or limit the amount of ultrasounds, would you be in support?

CHIROPRACTOR

There are numerous benefits associated with prenatal chiropractic care, including a safer, easier, and more comfortable pregnancy and birth, along with added benefits for the unborn baby. Physically, a mother's body experiences many changes over the course of 9 months. As body weight and stomach size increases, the center of gravity shifts, producing more compensation on muscles, ligaments, and joints. This commonly results in low back pain, sciatica, headaches, and even non-musculoskeletal issues such as acid reflux and digestive issues. Ligament tension and pelvic misalignments not only lead to discomfort during the pregnancy, but they can potentially impact the birthing process, as well. Published research and collaborative studies to show the efficacy and safety of chiropractic care in pregnancy can be found at: <http://icpa4kids.org/Chiropractic-Research/Pregnancy-and-Adjustments/>

The nervous system is the master controller of the body and administers the development of the baby in the womb. Chiropractic care corrects misaligned vertebrae that interfere with the functions of the nervous system. Chiropractic adjustments allow the nervous system to work at its best, promoting proper growth and development of the baby. Dr.



Jeanne Ohm says “Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy removes interference to the mother’s nervous system, enhancing baby development and uterine function. It balances her pelvis, eliminating undue tension to muscles and ligaments, thereby allowing for optimal fetal positioning” Chiropractic care is a safe (for mom and baby) and natural way to manage common symptoms associated with pregnancy.

Common symptoms that many expectant mothers experience include muscle soreness, low back pain, headaches, sciatica, morning sickness, acid reflux, indigestion, constipation, and others. Chiropractic care does not cure any of the common symptoms; however, taking pressure off the nervous system allows the body to adapt to the overwhelming physical and hormonal changes, resulting in decreased intensity and duration of symptoms. Chiropractors trained in prenatal care are equipped with the Webster Technique, which is a type of adjustment that re-aligns the sacrum and pelvic bones and reduces tension of the Round Ligament. Proper positioning of soft tissue and bone structures allows for adequate room for the baby to grow, develop, and position in preparation for birth. Although the Webster Technique does not turn breech babies, many breech births are avoided after correcting misalignments and reducing tension of the Round Ligament, both of which create more room for a baby to turn naturally on her or his own. When the baby is in proper position, and the mother’s pelvic bones and ligaments are at ease, the delivery is much safer and efficient for mom and baby. A further advantage of prenatal chiropractic care is that fewer complications tend to arise during delivery (cesarean section, vacuum extraction, forceps), allowing for a more smooth transition and recovery for all parties involved.

- **Training:** Do you have extended training with the ICPA? Are you Webster Technique certified?
- **Experience:** How long have you been in practice? How many of prenatal patients do you have? Do you also specialize in pediatric care?
- **Techniques:** What techniques do you use?
- **Cost:** What are the prices for services? Do you offer care plans?
- **Care:** What is included in my care plan? How many visits will I need? What is the duration of my care plan?

- **Availability:** Are you available to adjust during labor? Are you willing to adjust baby after delivery? Do you travel to the birth location?
- **Services:** Do you offer additional services such as educational materials or classes, soft tissue therapy, nutrition, etc?

MIDWIFE

MIDWIVES HAVE PROVIDED REPRODUCTIVE CARE FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS. IN EUROPE, MIDWIVES OFFERED CARE FOR HOME BIRTHS PRIOR TO OBS DELIVERING IN HOSPITALS. CURRENTLY, APPROXIMATELY 12 PERCENT OF BIRTHS IN AMERICA ARE DELIVERED VIA A MIDWIFE; HOWEVER, THE NUMBERS ARE STEADILY ON THE RISE. ACCORDING TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, “[MIDWIFERY] APPEARS TO BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE AND COST-EFFECTIVE TYPE OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE CARE OF NORMAL PREGNANCY AND BIRTH”. MIDWIVES ARE TRAINED AND DEGREE QUALIFIED MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS. THE ROLES OF A MIDWIFE INCLUDE CARING FOR THE PHYSICAL WELL BEING OF THE MOTHER VIA MONITORING VITAL SIGNS, AND MAKING MEDICAL DECISIONS, AS WELL AS THE SAFE DELIVERY OF THE BABY, AND PLACENTA. MIDWIVES CAN WORK EXCLUSIVELY OR ASSOCIATE WITH AN OB/GYN AND OTHER HEALTH PROVIDERS, SUCH AS SEE BABY MIDWIFERY. COMPARED TO THE TRADITIONAL PHYSICIAN LED BIRTHS, THE MIDWIFERY MODEL HAS THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS: DECREASED RATES OF INTERVENTIONS (C-SECTIONS, ANESTHESIA, LACERATIONS AND EPISIOTOMIES), REDUCED RISKS OF NEONATAL AND INFANT MORTALITY, AND INCREASED POSTPARTUM RECOVERY (DECREASED HOSPITAL STAYS, INCREASED BREASTFEEDING RATES). ATLANTA OFFERS MANY MIDWIFERY OPTIONS INCLUDING SEEBABY MIDWIFERY, ATLANTA BIRTH CENTER, INTOWN MIDWIFERY, AND HOSPITAL BASED MIDWIVES. WHEN CONSIDERING THE MIDWIFERY MODEL OF CARE, USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO FIND THE BEST FIT.

- **Education:** What education and certifications are obtained and through what organization?
- **Experience:** How many births have you assisted?
- **Availability:** Are you available during my due date? How many clients do you have around my due date? Do you have a backup doula? If there is a backup, is she available to meet?
- Are you willing to attend at my desired birth location?

- **Cost:** What are your fees? Are there payment plans? What services do the fees include?
- **Services:** What services do you provide before labor? Do you offer educational classes? How many times will we meet before labor? Do you provide postpartum support?
- **Contact:** How do I contact you? How often can I contact you? Are you always on call? When do I contact you?
- **Techniques:** What techniques do you use for emotional support? What techniques do you use for physical support?
- **Passion:** Why did you decided to become a midwife? What is your philosophy on the birth experience? Have you given birth? If so, did you use a midwife? What was your birth experience?

DOULA

The word Doula stems from the Greek word doule, meaning female servant or handmaiden. In turn, the overall role of a Doula is to serve and support the mother. Doulas do not partake in any medical procedures. However, they are trained and experience in providing information and emotional and physical support to the mother and family either prior, during, and after birth. Typically, a doula will meet prior to delivery to format a birth plan in order to understand the desired birth experience. Prior to birth, doulas provide resources, options, and information regarding expectations, and desires of the birth. During birth, doulas responsibilities vary from supporting the mother physically and emotionally such as birth positions, massages, to advocating the mother's desires. Postpartum doulas provide insight on recovery from birth - both physically and emotionally, information regarding infant feeding and soothing, mother and baby bonding, and overall care of the new family addition. This continued support allows for a smoother transition for both mom and the entire family.

The benefits of having a doula is the same as having a best friend, a doula will always be by your side, providing one on one guidance throughout the stages of labor. Other members of the birth team including the OB, birthing nurse, and at times, the midwife,

may have other patients to tend to; doulas, however, will remain by your side the entire time. Having the continued support and knowledge from a doula can improve your chances of having the wanted birth of your choice. According to the 2012 Cochrane Review, women who had continued support of doulas during their labor experienced a reduction in the use of pitocin, pain medication, and epidurals. The study also shows an overall decreased need for interventions (forceps and vacuum extractions) including a reduce rate of cesarean sections. Overall, the Cochrane study shows women who labored with a doula had shorter labors and overall increased satisfaction of their birth outcome. If a vaginal birth is the goal, having a doula will decreased the odds of having a cesarean birth by 80-90%, according to the American Journal of Managed Care.

Once you decide to add a doula to your birth team, you must decide on the doula for you. Thankfully, the metro Atlanta has many options and some doulas offer to travel to other cities and even across states. Feedback from others who utilized doulas always provides another perspective on which doula may fit your needs. Websites such as Dona International (www.dona.org) can help locate doulas according to location. Qualifications, and experience are key; however, it is vital to also connect with your doula on a personal level, as she will guide you through one of the most important, vulnerable, and intimate moment, your birth. Below are some questions to ask when considering a doula:

- **Training:** What training and certifications are obtained and through what organization?
- **Experience:** How many births have you assisted?
- **Availability:** Are you available during my due date? How many clients do you have around my due date? Do you have a backup doula? If there is a backup, is she available to meet?
- Are you willing to attend at my desired birth location?
- **Cost:** What are your fees? Are there payment plans? What services do the fees include?
- **Services:** What services do you provide before labor? Do you offer educational classes? How many times will we meet before labor? Do you provide postpartum support?

- **Contact:** How do I contact you? How often can I contact you? Are you always on call? When do I contact you?
- **Techniques:** What techniques do you use for emotional support? What techniques do you use for physical support?
- **Passion:** Why did you decided to become a doula? What is your philosophy on the birth experience? Have you given birth? If so, did you use a doula? What was your birth experience?

MASSAGE THERAPIST

Licensed massage therapist (LMT) have extensive training in soft tissue manipulation and decompression. Massages in general have many therapeutic benefits including decreased muscle tension, improved circulation, and reduction of stress. Prenatal massages have been known to help with symptoms associated with muscle tightness, joint pain, reduce anxiety and stress, decrease swelling, and improve lymphatic and blood circulation - both benefiting mother and baby. Massages are a natural and safe approach to managing common musculoskeletal symptoms such as headaches, neck pain, low back pain, sciatica, and others. Improved lymphatic and blood circulation helps reduce tissue waste and swelling, a common symptom of pregnancy due to increased stress on blood vessels

There are a variety of massage techniques such as Swedish, Deep Tissue, Myofascial Release, Trigger Point Therapy, and many more. Each technique has associated benefits and are used according to individual needs. Certification over technique is the first step when seeking prenatal massages. Although most LMT have training with pregnant clients, it is important to seek a LMT who is certified with prenatal massages. A LMT certified in prenatal massages will know what techniques to use, and when to seek prenatal massages. Although it is safe to receive a massage any time during pregnancy, most chose to wait until the second trimester, due to the increased risk of miscarriages associated with the first trimester. Massage therapy should be an incorporated prenatal care routine; however, it is recommended to consult with your Obstetrician or Midwife prior to seeking treatments. When seeking a massage therapist, utilize some of the following questions to find the ideal fit for your needs.

- **Training:** What training and certifications are obtained and through what organization?
- **Experience:** How long have you been certified in prenatal massages?
- What position(s) are used during the massage?

- **Techniques:** What techniques do you offer? Which is recommended for my individual needs?
- **Care Plan:** What duration is suggested (30 minutes, 60 minutes, 90 minutes)? How often should I get a massage?
- **Cost:** What are the prices for services? Do you offer massage packages?
- What type of moisturizer is used (lotion, coconut oil)?
- Do you travel or make house calls?

NUTRITIONAL ADVISER

A certified nutritional adviser is a critical member of your birth team. Proper diet and nutrition is vital for proper fetal development and overall health of mother during pregnancy. An ancient Ayurvedic proverb states, “When diet is wrong, medicine is of no use. When diet is correct, medicine is of need.” Having a trained nutritional adviser can assist with what proper foods and supplements are needed, that are customized to what your body needs during each phase of pregnancy. Specific vitamins and minerals are needed for proper fetal development, most of these can be found naturally in our food. There are other methods of obtaining such nutrition, including vitamins and supplements. Most women take a standard prenatal vitamin that is given to every person, in other words, it is not customized to body type, nutritional needs, organ function, and more. The source or make up of the supplement or vitamin is also important. Finding a



whole food concentrated supplement and vitamin allows for your body to efficiently and properly use the desired ingredients. Standard Process is a highly recommended source for whole food based supplements that provide safe and effective nutritional support. Jessica Elizondo, a certified nutritional adviser, is the top choice in the metro Atlanta area due to her experience with prenatal nutritional support and her offered services include certified nutrition to assess organ function, detect food sensitivities and allergies, grocery shopping tours, meal plans, and easy to follow recipes. Whoever you decided to use as nutritional adviser, make sure to ask the following questions:

- **Education:** What is your training and certifications? Where did you obtain such training and certifications?
- **Experience:** Do you have experience with prenatal nutrition? What sets your prenatal nutrition program apart from your other programs?
- **Cost:** What are the expected cost of services? What are the cost of materials (supplements, vitamins, etc).
- **Products:** What type of products do you use? Are your supplements whole food concentrations or isolated materials?
- **Services:** What services are offered (grocery shopping tours, meal planning, lab and blood work analysis, detox and cleanses, etc)?
- **Care Plan:** What protocol is suggested (cleanse, detox, supplements, etc)? How often should I have follow up visits?
- **Techniques:** What techniques (muscle testing, blood work, etc) are used?

PREGNANCY GUIDEBOOK- NUTRITION

Envision the most beautiful painting with a magnificent palette of colors strewn about the canvas. All of the blends create shades that captivate the eye, and the shapes and textures lift off the picture in such a way, so you feel as if you are amidst the very scene you see in front of you. The work of art draws you into a mental state of awe. The human body and all of its incredible capabilities call for this same sense of amazement, including the miracle of pregnancy.

A vital part of the body's processes is the food we eat. The nutrients we choose to put into our bodies builds the foundation of every living cell, especially during pregnancy when there are two bodies to support. Ann Wigmore, a holistic health practitioner quotes, "The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison." With high quality ingredients, your organs, bones, and pathways will function optimally. However, when fueled by toxic or poor quality nutrients, the structure of the body is compromised.

The purpose of the following advice, as well as the suggestions throughout this book, are intended to upregulate the functionality of your incredible body, giving you the absolute best chance at a high quality life.

SYNTHETIC VS WHOLE FOODS

All foods have life; each beet, tomato, and carrot begins as a seed and uptakes nutrients from the ground, water from the sky, and energy from the sun to grow. Their structures are a perfect balance of vitamins, minerals, and other components like fiber and fats, and this ratio allows foods to work effectively in the body as fuel, especially as a baby is growing and developing.

Let's use an automobile for comparison. For a car to work properly, it needs all of the necessary parts, including four tires. If one tire goes flat, the driver cannot efficiently continue to drive the car; it is not functioning the way it was designed or at its optimal level. To properly fix the situation, the car needs a whole new tire. Would just connecting a rim work? No. What about simply adding the spokes? Definitely not. The complete tire needs to be used.

Now let's look at a Vitamin C supplement, for instance. Just as with the above tire example, Vitamin C can be harmful if taken in its isolated (or separated) form of Ascorbic Acid. The body does not fully know what to do with the partial vitamin because it is not coming with all of its cofactors that make it functional or usable in the body's systems. Therefore, the response system sees the Ascorbic Acid as a foreign invader, tags it as a toxin, and gets it out as fast as possible. If the body continues to receive isolated vitamins and minerals in supplement form, the internal balance will become unstable, and a person can actually develop other vitamin/mineral deficiencies as a result. Nature has designed food in an ideal ratio of elements to ensure the most optimal functioning, so it is best to get nutrients from whole foods or whole food concentrates.

THE FOUNDATION OF FATS AND CHOLESTEROL

Nutrient balance is essential during pregnancy because these elements build the entirety of the baby's body as it forms in the womb. Two of the most important nutrients a baby's developing body needs are saturated fat and cholesterol, as they are the building blocks of the brain.

Breastfeeding supplies a child with the best nutrients for optimal growth (assuming the mother is also getting adequate nutrition in her diet). As authors Sally Fallon and Mary Enig write in their incredibly helpful book *Nourishing Traditions* (2001), a “[m]other’s milk provides a higher proportion of cholesterol than almost any other food” (p. 6).

Some of the best sources of healthy fats and cholesterol (as well as vitamins and minerals) are pasture-raised animal foods, including meat, eggs, and raw dairy. When animals are raised naturally, the way God intended them to live, they provide an incredible balance of nutrients. There is a caveat, though. Animal foods can also be harmful- it all depends on the source. When animals are raised in confined spaces with too many others and an overabundance of antibiotics, growth hormones, or GMO-grains in their diets, their bodies are not in balance. In fact, they become toxic and therefore unsafe for us to consume. Check out the article “How to Read Meat and Dairy Labels” on the Humane Society of the United States’ website (www.humanesociety.org) for descriptions of what each food label actually means in terms of animal welfare and quality.

FOOD RESOURCES

Eating naturally and organically as much as possible is the best option, so invest in good quality food. However, if you are unable to shop completely locally/organically, prioritize local, grass-fed/pasture-raised animal foods on your grocery list because remember, whatever goes into the animal goes into you.

If you do not have a local farmer’s market or store carrying the meats you need, check out USWellnessMeats.com. Also, if you are working on a budget, use the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen lists on the Environmental Working Group’s website (www.ewg.org) to see which foods should be bought organically and the ones that can be purchased conventionally.

THE POWER OF VEGGIES

Vegetables are powerhouses when it comes to fueling the body with energy. They are a main part of the base of our building blocks, some of our most important tools. Without

them, the structure would collapse! Vegetables should be enjoyed fresh, a majority (but not all) of them raw, and always chemical-free (i.e. organic).

Fresh- Once food is picked from the root, it begins to lose nutrients. Shop your local farmer's markets- the food is often picked that same day! Further, when food is eaten in its prime season, it is packed with nutrition, whereas when it is grown outside of its season (like watermelons growing in the wintertime), it is less nutritious.

Raw- Most of the food's nutrients are more bioavailable (or usable by the body) when uncooked because heating starts to breakdown the food and destroy its nutrient content.

Chemical-Free (Organic)- Pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, and genetically modified organisms (GMO's) can cause incredible harm to the human body. After all, they are meant to kill off any creature that tries to eat the plant, so who's to say those chemicals are not doing the same thing to our bodies as we eat the plant?

TOXINS AND GMO'S

Many chemicals have not been used long enough to fully understand the long-term effects they can cause to the human body. However, research is starting to show a link between their use and a declining human health. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) is a non-profit organization that conducts copious research studies on the toxicity levels of the items we use on a daily basis. In 2009, the group conducted a study that randomly selected 10 babies from African-American, Asian, and Hispanic ethnicities and found more than 200 chemicals residing in their umbilical cords. Further, for the first time in U.S. history, research discovered Bisphenol A (BPA) in umbilical cord blood in 9 out of the 10 babies.

Unfortunately, a majority of the accepted "safe" chemicals used in foods and health products have little to no scientific research proving their safety before their debut onto the market. Moreover, most do not understand the potential effects on the human body of mixing these chemicals together. While a limited amount of one chemical might be deemed acceptable and safe, a combination of a handful of chemicals could have detrimental consequences.

Food can also be a toxin if it has been genetically modified (restructuring the plant's DNA) or processed in a harmful way. When food is altered from its natural form, our bodies do not know how to react and often tag the entering food as a toxin, which can cause

inflammation and symptoms like headaches, mental cloudiness, indigestion, sickness, etc. It is best to avoid high sugary foods, hydrogenated and vegetable oils, and ingredients you cannot pronounce or understand (if you do not know what it is, your body probably doesn't either!).

THE REDEEMING NEWS ON TOXINS

There are several companies that create safe products for you and your family. A great way to find the best options is on the EWG website (www.ewg.org) to see how your household products, makeup, sunscreen, and foods measure on the “safety” scale. EWG also provides alternative options that are healthier for you and your family.

When determining the best products to use or the food to eat, look at the ingredients. They are the key to your questions. The fewer the ingredients the better. In fact, foods that do not need an ingredient label are the best (i.e. fruits, veggies, meats, nuts/seeds). Choose items as close to their natural state as possible. Shop at your local farmer's market for the freshest food available. If a farmer's market is not available to you, gather your groceries from the outside perimeter of the store— that is where all of the life-giving foods are!

STEPS TO A NUTRITIOUS PREGNANCY

With the vast amount of information offered about proper nutrition, eco-friendly living, and best pregnancy practices, it can easily be overwhelming to choose the ideal lifestyle for your health and baby's. But have no fear. Simply follow these guidelines: decide, commit, invest, and trust.

1. Decide your why. Why is it important to you to choose the healthiest life possible for you and your newborn?
2. Commit to learning about whole, real foods, as well as the likely dangers of toxins. After learning, put your new knowledge into practice by making modifications to your daily food choices to optimize the nutrients going into your and your baby's bodies as fuel. Change out plastic containers with glass. Choose to cook in coconut oil or grass-fed butter rather than vegetable or canola oil. Simple steps lead to big differences when it comes to your and your baby's lifelong health.
3. Make an investment. Time-wise, financially, energy-wise, you name it. We can either invest now or pay later. Imagine looking outside your back window in four years and seeing your child running with energy. Joyfully, he or she is free of sickness,

injury, or allergies. Now, that is a sign of a job-well done (and still on-going!), especially in an overly-toxic world. Start investing in your child's life when he or she is merely a thought. Invest in your own body, your own health journey, because the better environment you carry inside, the more utopian home your new babe has to grow and develop. Are you interested in learning how your body is operating at a functional level? We offer nutritional testing and techniques to meet nutritional deficiencies and upregulate your body for optimal functioning! See contact info at the bottom of this page.

4. Lastly, trust your motherly instincts. Moms are given an incredible intuition that is intended to be a guide that steers their families on a healthy path. When you are pregnant (and not pregnant), that can mean avoiding the package of food with a laundry list of ingredients you cannot pronounce, let alone know what they do to the body. Having faith in your intuition can be choosing that apple and raw cashew butter as a snack versus the snack pack because you know which option is going to provide the biggest “bang for your buck” nutritionally. Trust your gut, and if you have questions, let's chat!

Contact the office (404-355-5499), or email (letschat@morethanfoodnutrition.com) for more information.

For other resources on nutrition and pregnancy, check out www.morethanfoodnutrition.com. Pregnancy is a unique and special time for parents. Build up your bodies, so your baby can have the best chance at health. You can do this!





Jessica Elizondo, Certified Nutritional Adviser and CEO of More Than Food

EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Exercise and physical activity are keys to having a healthy pregnancy and can help with postpartum recovery. Daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes can help increase circulation, reduce the chances and/or manage gestational diabetes and hypertension, strengthen core and pelvic muscles to help reduce and prevent aches and pain, and help with the physical demands of labor. There are options for exercise and physical health based on your pre pregnancy activity level and overall health goals. Some women who participated in crossfit and weightlifting activities prior to their pregnancy, are typically able to continue with such intense exercise and physical activities. However, it is not advised to start such strenuous physical activities during pregnancy. Low impact activity options include yoga, barre, walking, cycling, and aquatics. Activities with little to no impact are suggested in order to prevent injury, and decrease stress and strain on ligaments and joints. Walking and cycling can be performed daily with as little time as 30 minutes per session. In order to engage all leg muscles, walking outside versus a treadmill is suggested. Cycling can be performed on a personal bicycle and or at any of the cycle studios in Atlanta, such as FlyWheel and Cycle Bar. Barre classes on the other hand, can be used for strengthening and stability of muscle groups with low impact. Barre combines techniques of ballet and yoga in order to target multiple muscle groups at a time. Studios like Pink Barre offer multiple locations (Buckhead, Highlands, and Emory Point) and utilize trained instructors to provide the ultimate barre experience.

ATLANTA CYCLE AND BARRE OPTIONS

FLYWHEEL

Locations: Alpharetta, Midtown, and Buckhead

Website: <https://www.flywheelsports.com/>

CYCLE BAR

Locations: Buckhead and Dunwoody

Website: <https://cyclebar.com/>

PINK BARRE

Locations: Buckhead, Highlands, and Emory Point

Website: <http://pink-barre.com/>

ATLANTA PRENATAL YOGA OPTIONS:

There are many associated benefits of incorporating yoga into your weekly routine, including awareness of body position and posture, proper breathing, and mediation. There are a variety of yoga poses that help strengthen muscles of the back, abdomen, and legs. The combination of strengthening and stretching muscle groups help reduce forward head posture - typically associated with the shift of center of gravity as baby grows, rounded shoulders, and decreases overall muscle tension, especially hip flexors.

It is advised to seek prenatal yoga classes in order to obtain proper form and prevent injury. Yoga is intended for all levels with the use of proper breathing and associated modifications and variations of poses. Prenatal yoga options in Atlanta include Oh Baby Fitness, Be Yoga, Solstice, and Active Sol.

OH BABY FITNESS

Locations: Alpharetta, Midtown, Dunwoody, Decatur

Website: <https://www.ohbabyfitness.com/>

BE YOGA

Location: 107 Church Street Marietta, GA 30060

Website: <https://www.beyogaatlanta.com/>

SOLSTICE

Location: 195 Arizona Ave #500 Atlanta, GA 30307

Website: <http://www.solsticeatlanta.com/>

ACTIVE SOL

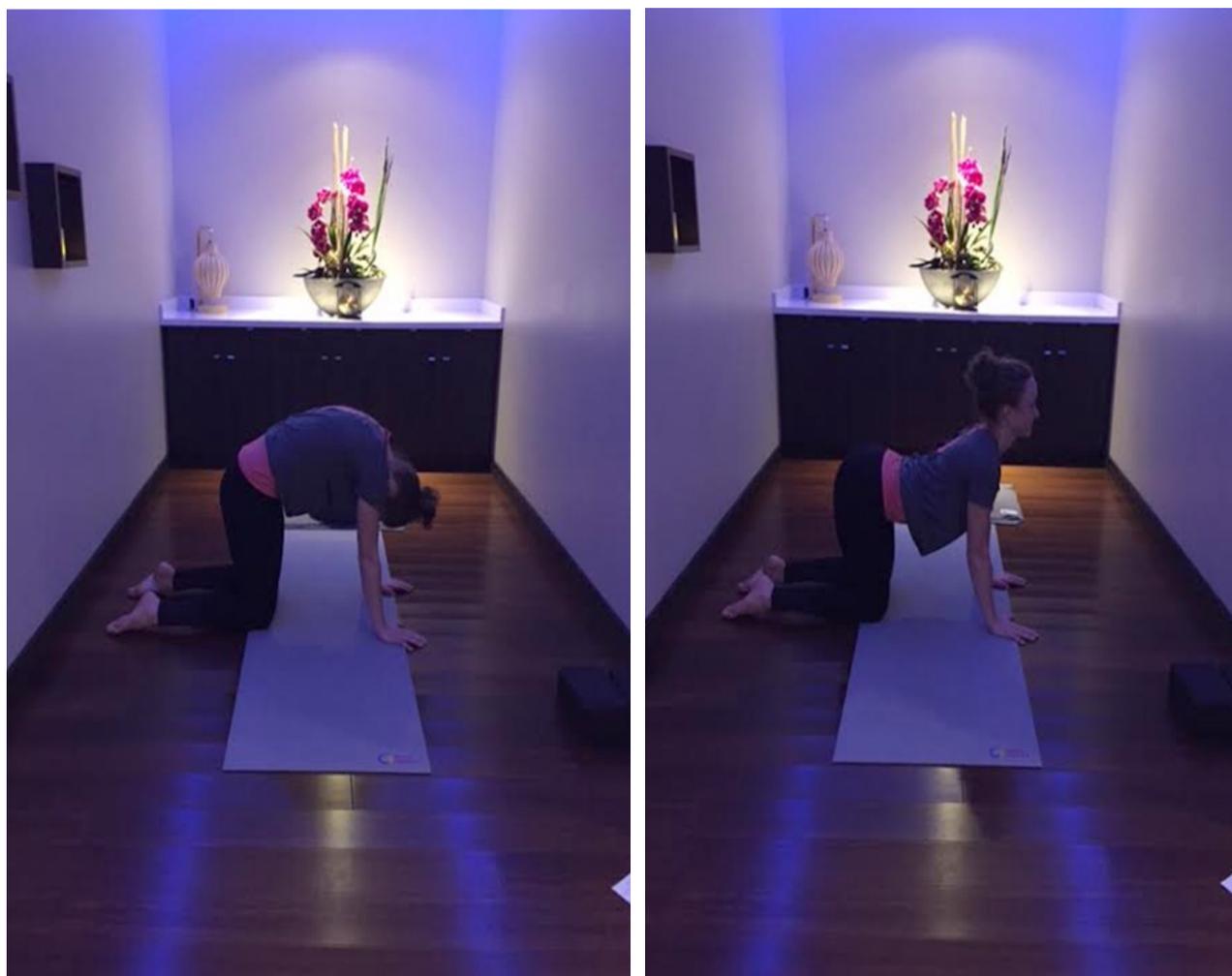
Location: 200 Bennett St NW Atlanta, GA 30309

Website: <http://activesolyoga.com/>

Below are yoga poses helpful during any phase of pregnancy. Breathing is the most important aspect of yoga; therefore, make sure to inhale and exhale equally with each pose. It is advised to perform the following poses under the supervision of a certified trained yoga teacher in order to prevent injury.

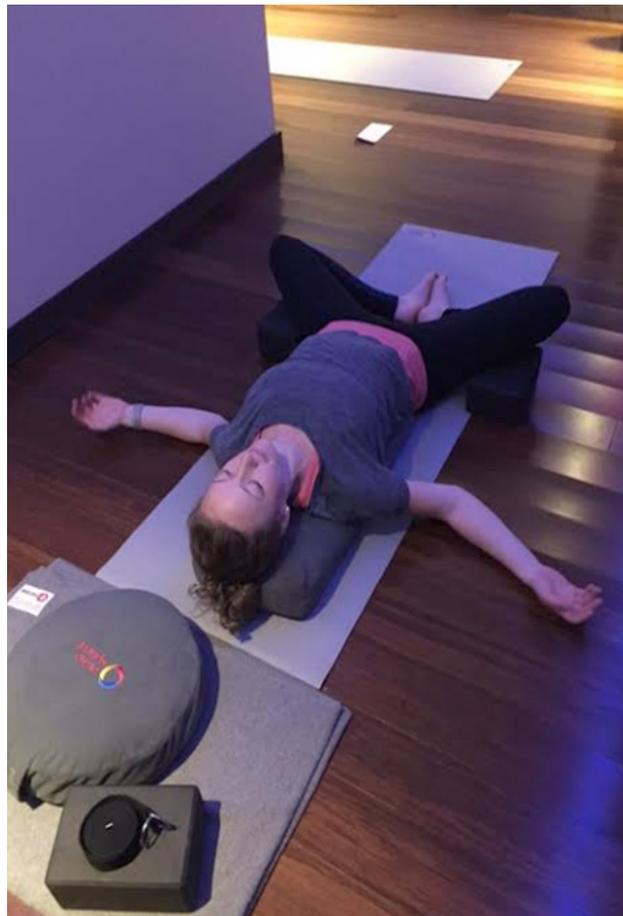
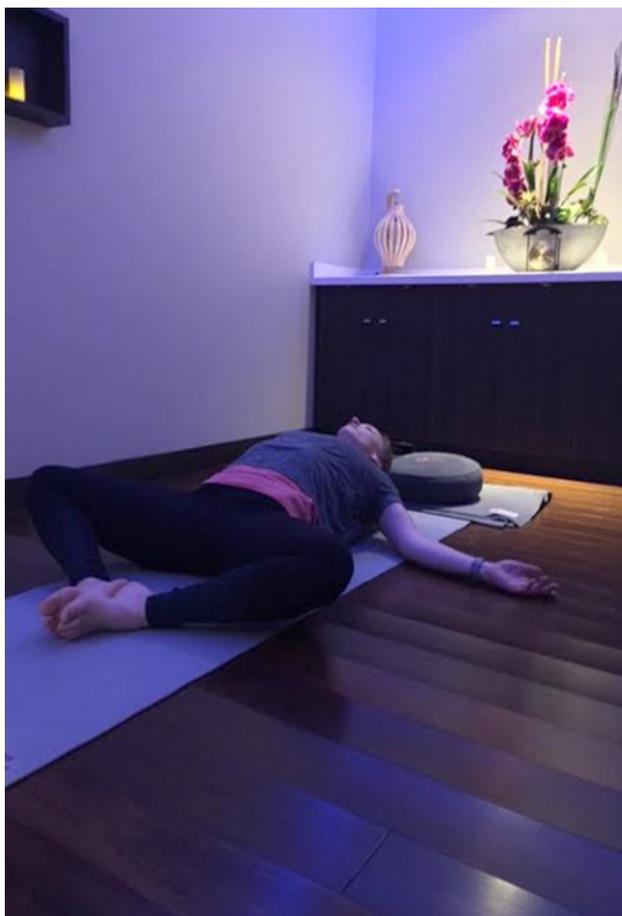
CAT COW POSE

Cat and Cow are separate poses; however, they are often combined together. Both poses engage core and upper back muscles to help reduce tension associated with forward posture.



SUPINE BOUND ANGLE

Supine bound angle is a resting pose and can help stretch the hip flexors and shoulder muscles. This pose synced with proper breathing can help lower the heart rate and be used as a meditation pose.



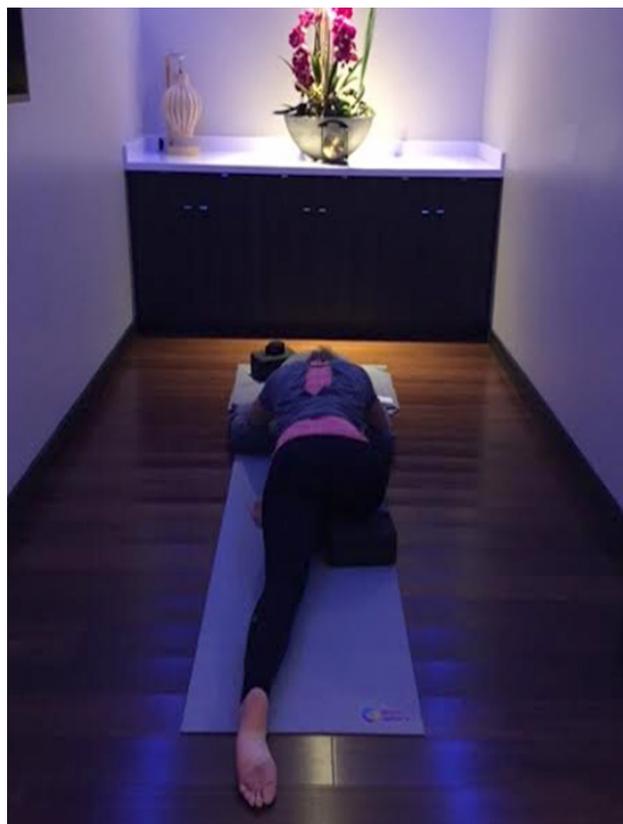
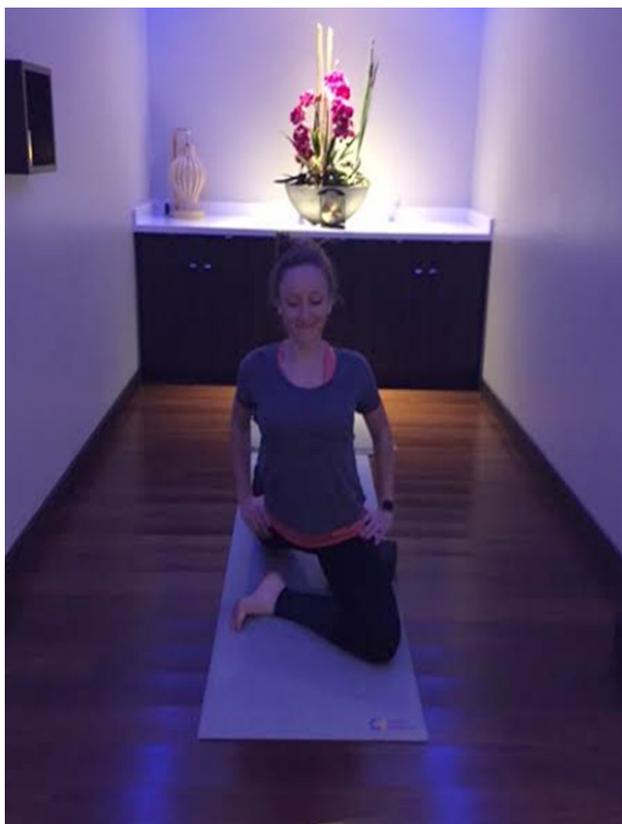
GARLAND - YOGI SQUAT POSE

The Garland pose is also known as the Yogi squat. This pose opens the hips and pelvis and maintains core stability. Modifications include using yoga blocks to assist with the squat.

PIGEON POSE

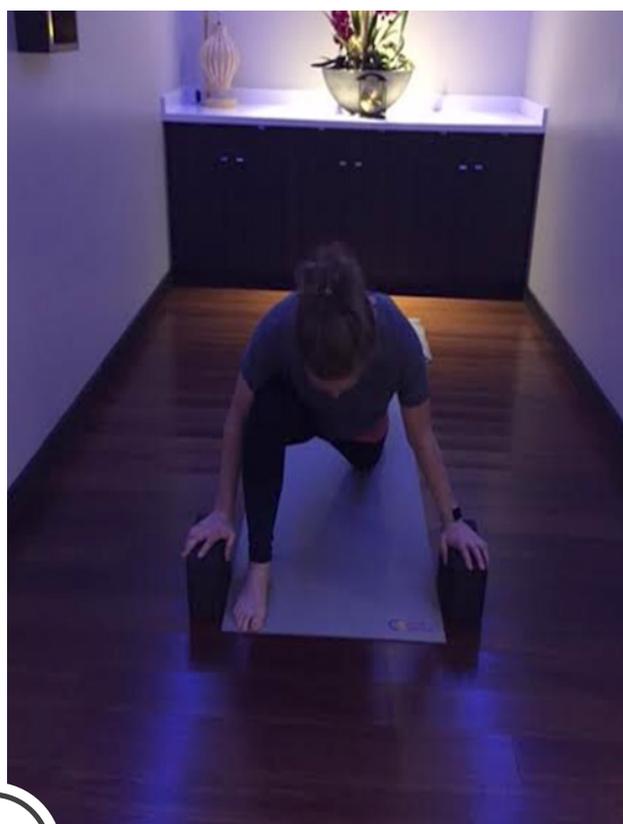
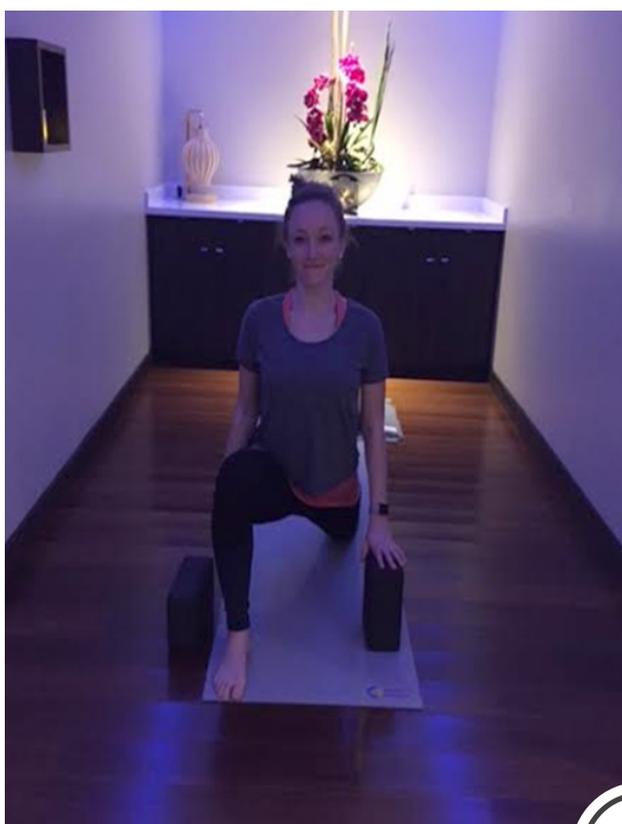
Pigeon pose is a hip opener utilized to stretch hip flexor muscles and ease tension related to the round ligament. Variations of the pigeon pose include using a yoga block or pillow to support the engaged hamstring (back of thigh) - as in the picture on the right.





LOW LUNGE POSE

The low lunge pose allows stretching of the hip flexors, groin region, and region of the round ligaments and simultaneously opens the chest. Variations can be used when range of motion is limited as seen in the picture to the right.



ATLANTA BIRTH LOCATION OPTIONS

Having your ideal birth comes with a variety of options, including the actual location of the birth. The environment of the birth establishes the tone can ensure having the birth of your choice. From hospital births to home births, there are many options and opinions often resulting in controversy. The freedom to choose based on expectations, desires and health factors are most important, as each mother should feel empowered to have the birth of her choice.

HOSPITAL AND HOME BIRTHS

Hospital births are now the traditional option for most births in America; however, the original location for births were at home. For centuries, giving birth at home was the norm. Currently, many mothers are choosing to go back to the idea of home births. Both hospital and home births have their associated pros and cons, all dependent on the desires and preferences, health of baby, and health of the expectant mother.

HOSPITAL BIRTHS:

Hospital births offer the security of advanced equipment and technology, fully trained medical staff, and a sterile environment. This added security provides peace of mind in case of emergency scenarios that can occur during labor and delivery. Most hospital births are controlled, resulting in little varieties and customizations. Most mothers are confined to a bed, there are typically numerous exams and fetal monitoring that occur during labor. On the other hand, not all hospitals are the same. Some have been accredited as “Baby Friendly” hospitals and welcome the co-management of midwives and doulas. When considering a hospital birth, investigate specific statistics (c-section rates, VBAC policies, family centered deliveries, etc), birth options such as water births, payment and insurance coverage, and research to see if similar philosophies are shared. Such research should be conducted as soon as possible in order to ensure your birth provider (OB or midwife) has privileges at the associated hospital.

HOME BIRTHS

More recently, many women are choosing the original location of birth - at home. Home births are a great option for low risk pregnancies and those who wish to have a family centered birth in the comfort of their own home. Home births are conducted by a midwife; however, an OB can be used as a backup for potential hospital transfers. Births at home can be customized from birth types (water, positions), freedom to move and eat/drink,

and the option of having the physical support of friends and family. Other benefits of home births include the cost effectiveness - typically 60% less than most hospital births, instant bonding and breastfeeding, limited examinations and fetal monitoring, and the decreased risk of medical interventions. Home births are considered safe for low risk pregnancies and with the team of experienced birth professionals; however, it is important to be flexible and plan for potential hospital transfer if ever necessary. Having a back up OB, and a systematic plan, can reduce the stress of hospital transfers.

ATLANTA BIRTH CENTER

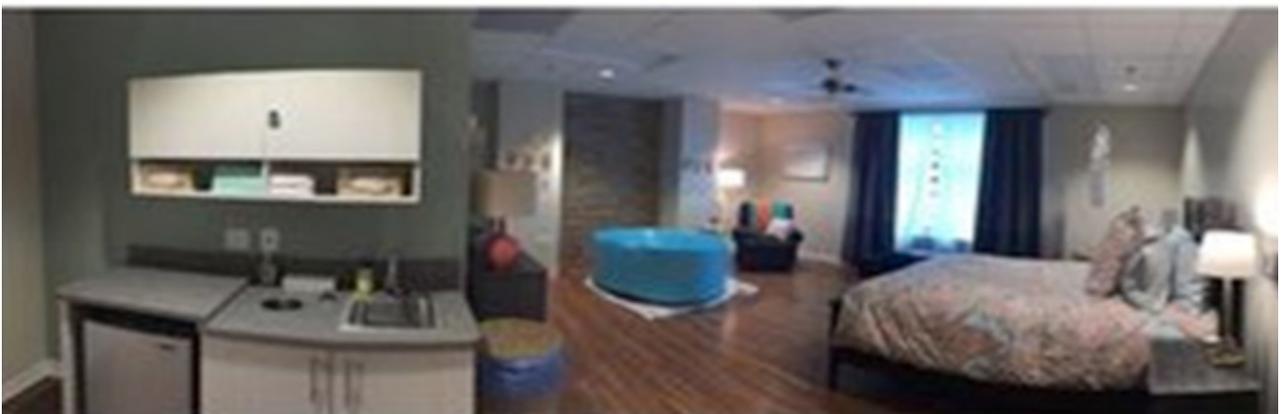
Birth centers provide a happy medium between home births and hospital births by providing a home like environment within a healthcare system that supports a holistic and wellness model. Atlanta Birth Center is the only birth center in the metro Atlanta area, located in Midtown. The location of the birth center is new to Atlanta; however, the vision has been in place for years, thanks to the founders, midwives Margaret Strickhouser and Anjli Hinman and Dr. Brad Bootstaylor who is a perinatologist. The vision of establishing an empowered birth experience utilizing a comprehensive birth team became a reality in 2016. Atlanta Birth Center offers a midwifery model of evidenced based care providing gynecological and primary health, prenatal, and postpartum care. Educational classes and community building events are offered to clients in order to create a community around the birth experience. Private rooms are provided and provide a home-like environment, promoting overall comfort and freedom. Other amenities include access to a full kitchen, queen sized beds, and abundant labor coping tools(birth balls, hydrotherapy including waterbirth tubs and large showers, aromatherapy, homeopathy, music, and birthing stools).What sets Atlanta Birth Center apart from other birthing facilities is the comprehensive care that is encouraged. Birth team include professionals in midwifery, nursing, obstetrics, nutrition, psychology, physical fitness, chiropractic, acupuncture, massage, childbirth education and doula services.“ Working as a team, our providers will offer truly comprehensive care. Knowing that “it takes a village to raise a child,” we will also welcome your family and friends to participate in your care at Atlanta Birth Center”. Midwife meet and greets and tours of the birth center are offered throughout each month in order to experience the Atlanta Birth Center intimately.

Location: 1 Baltimore Place NW, Suite 105 Atlanta, GA 30308

Contact Information: 404-427-2770

Website: www.atlantabirthcenter.org

Highlights: Cost effective and comprehensive wholistic midwifery model of care that has an inviting atmosphere with highly trained birth professionals.



DEKALB MEDICAL CENTER



The DeKalb Medical Center hosts over 5,000 births per year and is recognized as Georgia's first "Baby Friendly" Hospital. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) founded the Baby Friendly hospital initiative, in order to recognize birth locations that offer a standard of care for both infant feeding and bonding of mother and baby. DeKalb Medical offers a level III neonatal intensive care unit, maternity educational classes, support groups, umbilical cord blood donation, and a variety of birth options. Birth options include cesarean sections, family centered cesarean sections, vaginal birth after cesarean section (VBAC), vaginal twin delivery, and water immersion/water based births. DeKalb Medical's relationship with See Baby Midwifery, is the defining factor that sets it apart from other Atlanta area hospitals. See Baby Midwifery exclusively services births at DeKalb Medical Center. This long standing relationship has influenced the culture of the DeKalb Medical Center health professionals (doctors, nurses, lactation consultants, etc) to adopt a holistic approach to the birthing and postpartum process. According to their website, DeKalb Medical Center states "We offer respectful care throughout every step of the labor, birth, and postpartum process, and adopt a holistic approach which addresses the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the mother to be and her baby. We give personalized care with respect and dignity that is woman centered and empowering."

Location: 2701 N Decatur Rd, Decatur, GA 30033

Contact Information: 404.501.1000

Website: www.dekalbmedical.org/our-services/maternity-services

Highlights: Baby friendly hospital that supports holistic birth approaches, VBACs and family centered c-sections. Also has standing relationship with See Baby Midwifery.



ULTRASOUNDS DURING PREGNANCY

Prenatal ultrasounds are typically routine during pregnancy. There are known benefits of ultrasounds; however, recently, many question the need and even possible associated risks. When it comes to your pregnancy, you and your health care provider can discuss the need for and amount of ultrasounds throughout your pregnancy. A basic knowledge of the purpose of ultrasounds, types of ultrasounds, and common expectations regarding ultrasounds can prepare you for this conversation.



PURPOSE OF ULTRASOUNDS

Ultrasounds utilize high frequency sound waves on the abdomen and pelvic region in order to create a sonogram, or picture, of internal structures. The sonogram shows the characteristics of soft tissue and organs. During pregnancy, ultrasounds are routinely used to show pictures of the baby and placenta. Initially, ultrasounds are used to confirm fetal heartbeat, determine the due date/gestational age, number of fetuses (single, twins, etc), and to rule out ectopic pregnancies. They are also used to ensure proper fetal growth and development, gender, assess for birth defects, placenta health, baby weight and fetal position.

WHEN TO HAVE AN ULTRASOUND?

Ultrasounds can be performed throughout pregnancy. Initially, ultrasounds are performed around weeks 18-20 in order to confirm placenta health, and proper fetal growth and development. Gender can be determined around 20 weeks. Ultrasounds may be performed earlier to determine the due date or gestational age. Based on medical necessity, additional ultrasounds can be used to monitor baby and placenta health, quantity of amniotic fluid, fetal weight, and fetal position. Ultrasounds are recommended

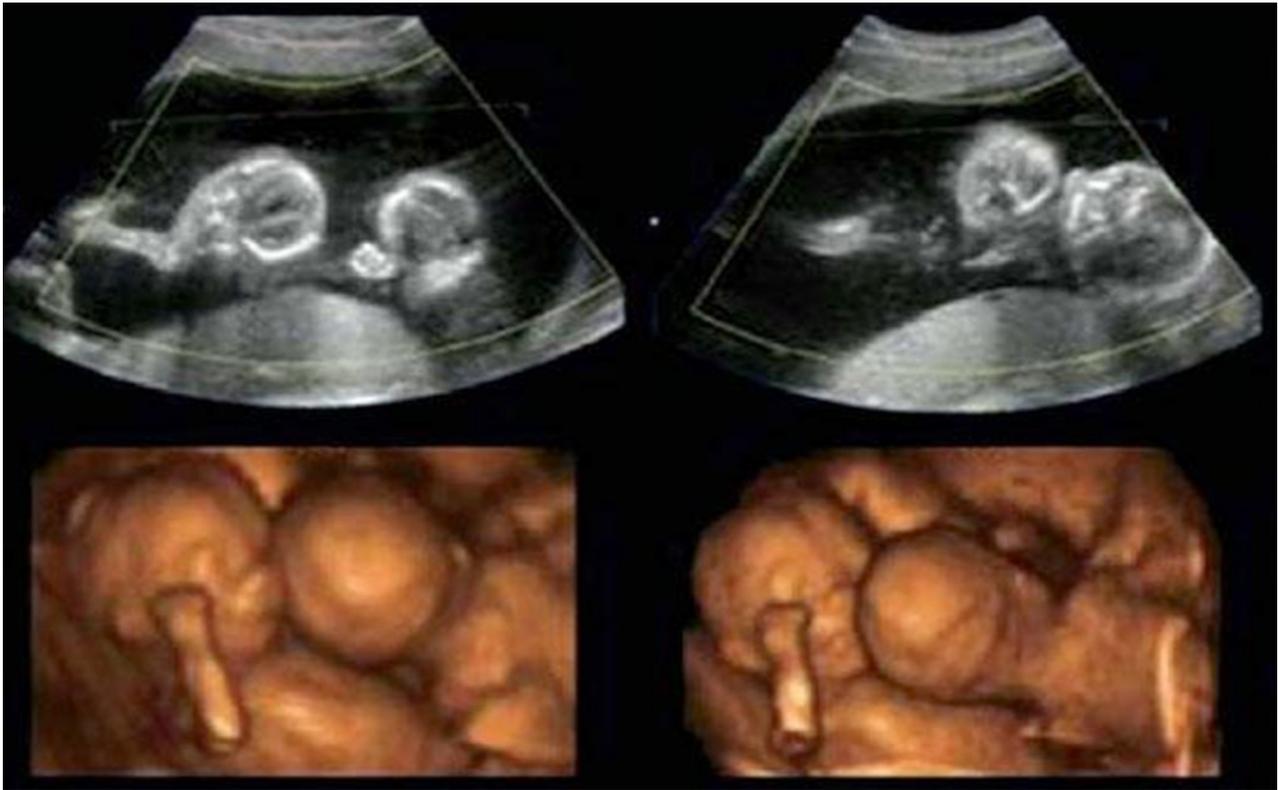
when the baby exceeds their due date to confirm the health and wellbeing of baby and baby's environment.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

Traditional, 3D, and 4D ultrasounds are non invasive. A transducer and gel are used on the external surface of the abdomen in order to create the sonogram. Transvaginal ultrasounds utilize a transducer wand that is directly inserted into the vagina. Typically, all ultrasounds are done in a fairly quickly manner, ranging from five to thirty minutes long. Ultrasounds are virtually painless, exceptions include the discomfort of the cold temperature of the gel, discomfort of a full bladder with transvaginal ultrasounds, and moments of increased external pressure of the sonographer. A physical copy of the sonogram is typically provided that visit for your enjoyment and sharing with friends, family, and social media.

TYPES OF ULTRASOUNDS:

There are many prenatal ultrasounds options including the traditional 2D (2 Dimensional) ultrasound and more advanced 3D, 4D, and transvaginal. 3D and 4D ultrasounds have the ability to illustrate a more in depth and detailed image of internal structures. A 4D also shows movement in real time, similar to a video. Typically, 2D ultrasounds provide enough information; however, 3D and 4D are utilized to provide a more detailed examination for concerns of fetal abnormalities.



2D (upper images) versus a 3D (lower images) ultrasound

SAFETY AND SIDE EFFECTS OF ULTRASOUNDS

All ultrasounds are deemed routined and safe for mother and baby. There is no radiation exposure, instead high frequency sound waves are used. Risk and side effects of repetitive ultrasound exposure are not fully understood or studied. According to the American Pregnancy Organization, ultrasounds should only be used when medically indicated. Limiting the amount of ultrasound exposure is the most ideal way to avoid any potential risks. Once baby is here, take all the pictures your heart desires, until then, try to keep the number of ultrasounds to a minimum, when medically necessary.

BIRTH PLAN

There are many birth options from vaginal to cesarean, locations vary from at home births to hospitals. The array of options provides expectant mothers with many choices that should be made prior to birth. Having a preexisting birth plan ensures you have the birth of your choice. Below provides a detailed outline of a sample birth plan. Use this to customize your very own and inform your birth team of your desires. Share your birth plan with members of your birth team prior to birth in order to assure every team member is prepared and willing to follow your blueprint. Prepare copies to all members of your birth team upon completion. Remember, it is your birth. There are no wrong or right ways, just the way your body and self are prepared for.

BEFORE LABOR

- I prefer to have ___ vaginal exams
- I prefer to have ___ ultrasounds
- Discuss induction options prior to due date
- I want at least ___ days post my due date before inducing labor, as long as baby and I are healthy
- I want no time restrictions if I go past my due date, and plan to have no induction, as long as baby and I are healthy
- I want to labor at home for as long as possible

INDUCTION

For induction methods I do or do not want the following:

- Acupuncture
- Chiropractic

- Enema
- Herbs
- Stripping membranes
- Pitocin

I would like the following time period before induction

- Wait 6 hours
- Wait 12 hours
- As long as baby and I are healthy, I want no induction methods

ENVIRONMENT

- I prefer the following location for my birth:
 - Home
 - Birthing Center (Name and Address)
 - Hospital (Name and Address)
- I want to utilize the following options during labor:
 - Water birth
 - Shower
 - Birthing bed
 - Birthing ball
 - Squatting

- I want or do not want the following in the room:
 - Partner
 - Midwife
 - Doula
 - Chiropractor
 - Children
 - Parents
 - Extended family
 - I want privacy. Limit or restrict all visitors

PAIN RELIEF

- Only if I request, offer pain relief
- Offer and suggest pain relief when needed
- I want to discuss pain relief methods as soon as possible
- Use the following methods to relieve pain:
 - Breathing techniques
 - Meditation
 - Acupuncture
 - Massage
 - Hypnosis

- Water therapy
- Walking and movement
- Epidural
- Narcotics

LABOR

Time Limits:

- I want zero time limits for laboring and pushing as long as I and baby are healthy
- Medical intervention will be allowed after __ hours of pushing.

POSITIONS:

I prefer the following positions during labor:

- Standing
- Squatting
- On the toilet
- Hands and knees
- Medical ball
- Lying down
- Avoid stirrups

EPISIOTOMY

- I want no episiotomy and will risk tearing
- I want an episiotomy

MONITORING

- Continuous monitoring
- Intermittent monitoring
- Utilize the Lamaze, Bradley, and/or Childbirth Hypnosis techniques

DELIVERY

- When pushing, I want to rely on instincts instead of orders from birth professionals.
- When pushing, I want guidance on when or when not to push.
- Please avoid the use of forceps and vacuum extractions.
- Forceps and vacuum extractions may be used to assist delivery.
- I would like my partner to catch the baby as he/she is delivered.
- I would like my birth professional to catch the baby as he/she is delivered.
- If an emergency cesarean is needed, please allow my partner and I time to discuss details and follow our initial newborn procedures below.

CESAREAN

- Unless a medical emergency, I opt not to have a cesarean.
- Inform me on when it may be a good option to have a cesarean
- I want to plan and schedule a cesarean.
- I would like to hold my baby immediately after delivery
- If I am unable to hold my baby, I want my partner to be able to have first contact.
- I would like my baby to be sent to the nursery as I recover.

NEWBORN PROCEDURES

- I request immediate skin to skin contact as soon as baby is delivered
- I request the time to breastfeed baby before we are separated
- I opt of having my baby bathe right after birth
- My partner and I will bathe our baby using our own bathing products
- I do or do not want eye drops administered to my baby
- I decline PKU testing
- I would like to delay PKU testing
- I want routine PKU testing
- Do or do not administer Vitamin K
- Postpone all immunizations
- I would like all routine immunizations
- Do not circumcise my baby
- Do not retract baby's foreskin
- I would like my baby circumcised
- I would like to meet with a lactation consultant as soon as possible
- I want my baby to exclusively be breastfed
- I want to combine breastfeeding and formula feeding
- I want my baby to be formula fed

- I would like all newborn procedures to be performed immediately
- I want my baby in the room with me at all times, unless there is an emergency
- I prefer my baby to partially stay in the nursery when I am resting
- I would like the nursery to fully care for my baby and bring him/her for feedings

THIRD STAGE LABOR

Umbilical Cord:

- Avoid clamping until pulsation stops
- Allow partner to cut cord
- Delay cord cutting for ____ time.
- I made arrangements to bank baby's cord

PLACENTA

- Use Pitocin to promote placenta to be born
- Avoid Pitocin unless there are risks of hemorrhage
- I made arrangements to take the placenta home

HOSPITAL STAY

- Be as short as possible
- Be as long as possible
- I prefer a private room

- I prefer my partner to remain in the room during my stay. Please provide accommodations
- I prefer my family and children to be allowed with no restrictions
- I prefer guests to be allowed to visit with no restrictions
- I want
- privacy during my hospital stay. Limit or restrict all visitors