

FIRST VISIT TO THE OB OFFICE

History

During your first visit to the OB office, a medical, family, and pregnancy history are usually obtained. From this information, your OB provider will be able to give you some idea if there are any problems in these areas that should be considered for your pregnancy.

Physical

Obstetrical physical and pelvic exams are also usually done. This informs the OB provider of any physical problems that might affect your pregnancy.

Lab Tests

Various blood tests and cultures are usually done to obtain information needed to monitor you and your baby's health. A list of these is included in our booklet "Preparing For a Healthy Baby", under the section "Prenatal Testing". Ask your provider to fill out your blood type on your "Appointment Record."

Delivery Date

At the initial visit, your "due date" will be calculated. Your "due date" is just an estimate, however. A baby may be born before or as much as two weeks after this date. The most common method to calculate your "due date" is to count back three months from the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP) and add seven days. This time period is 280 days or forty weeks.

ROUTINE VISITS TO YOUR OB OFFICE

Visits after the initial one may seem short, but they are very important. At each visit you will have your weight, urine and blood pressure checked. The baby's growth and heartbeat will be evaluated. By checking these, and listening to any questions or concerns you may have, it will be possible to detect early problems that may affect you and your baby. If all is going well, you will probably be seen every four weeks for the first six months, then twice a month in your seventh and eighth month and weekly during your last month.

PRENATAL TESTING

Several laboratory tests are done to obtain information needed to monitor you and your developing baby's health. Listed below are a few of the most common tests. Your OB provider may omit or add tests to these depending on your pregnancy.

Prenatal Profile: Done on or soon after the first OB visit.

- Blood test:
 - Blood type and Rh factor (+ or -).
 - Rubella - to check for immunity to German measles.
 - Complete blood count (CBC) to see if you are low in iron (anemic).
This test is usually repeated during the pregnancy.

Prenatal Profile: (continued) Done on or soon after the first OB visit.

- Pap Smear - to test for cervical cancer.
- Urine screen - to test for possible infection and how the kidneys are working.
- Syphilis test (VDRL, RPR) to determine if you have this infection. If so, prompt treatment is necessary.
- Gonorrhea and Chlamydia cultures to detect an infection that must be treated.
- Other blood tests or cultures may be done depending on your provider.

Serum Integrated Screen (SIS): First test done between the 10th and 13th week and second test done between the 15th and 20th week. The serum integrated screen test involves two separate blood draws combining serum markers measured in the first trimester and the second trimester to determine an estimate of risk for Down's syndrome, Trisomy 18 and neural tube defects.

Diabetic Screen: Done between the 24th and 28th week of pregnancy. Pregnancy affects the way some women's bodies use sugar. It may result in a condition called "Gestational Diabetes". If untreated, this can put you and your baby at increased risk. The Diabetic Screen is done to identify these women.

Rh: A woman is either Rh+ or Rh-. If you are Rh-, and the father of the baby has Rh+ blood, there is a chance that the baby could have Rh+ blood. A small amount of the baby's blood could come in contact with your blood. If this occurs, your body doesn't recognize the + blood type and tries to fight against it by producing antibodies. To determine if this has occurred, a blood test is done between 26-28 weeks to see if you have developed any antibodies against your baby's blood. If this has not occurred, an injection of Rhogam is given to prevent this from happening.

You will need Rhogam if you are Rh- and:

- If you are between 26 - 28 weeks of pregnancy.
- If you have a miscarriage or abortion.
- If you are within 72 hours after delivery and the baby is Rh+.
- If you have an amniocentesis.
- If you have a significant amount of vaginal bleeding during the pregnancy.

Ultrasound (sonogram) examination: Done usually between the 16th and 20th week. Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves that are transmitted onto a television screen. It is a non-invasive, painless method of scanning mother's abdomen to determine baby's growth and development, to detect fetal heart motion, to determine placental placement, and to examine the amount of fluid that surrounds the baby. The gender of the baby can also be determined after the 20th week of pregnancy depending on the position of the baby.