



StarBabies

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A PUBLICATION OF TEXAS CHILDREN'S HEALTH PLAN

Protect your child from measles

You have the power to protect your children (and yourself) from measles by getting vaccinated. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is very safe and effective. If you have questions about your child's vaccinations status, contact your health care provider today.

Learn more on page 6.



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Week 16

Your baby's development

Your baby now weighs about 3.9 ounces (110 grams) and measures about 4.7 inches (12 cm) in length from crown to rump. Your baby can hold his or her head erect, and the development of facial muscles allows for a variety of expressions, such as squinting and frowning.

Your body

Between weeks 16 and 18 of pregnancy, your health care provider may offer you a second trimester screening test (known as the multiple marker test or triple screen). This test measures the levels of alpha-fetoprotein (AFP), a protein produced by the fetus, and the pregnancy hormones hCG and estriol in the mother's blood. It's called a quadruple screen (or quad screen) when the level of an additional substance, called inhibin-A, is also measured.

If you have already done a blood test and/or ultrasound in the first trimester (first trimester screening test), then the results of the two tests together is called an integrated screening test. The results of these tests can tell moms whether their babies are at risk for (not whether they have) neural tube defects such as spina bifida or chromosomal abnormalities such as Down Syndrome.

An abnormal result does not necessarily mean that your baby has a problem — but it may mean more testing is required. Talk to your health care provider about the risks and advantages of these tests.

To read the full article or to access the entire pregnancy calendar, visit: kidshealth.org/en/parents/week16.html#catmedical-care

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It's not too early to prepare for your baby's birth!

Make your plans now to attend one of our childbirth classes. These classes are just one of the extra services you get for being a Texas Children's Health Plan member. Why should you take a childbirth class?

- Get cool gifts and tips for a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby
- Comfortable environment to learn with other mothers like you
- Your partner/family member will be able to learn with you
- Have answers to your questions regarding healthy birth and breastfeeding
- Learn the keys to successfully begin to breastfeed.

For the breastfeeding portion of the class, you will:

- Increase your confidence in your ability to breastfeed your baby for as long as you desire.
- Learn what to expect, how to establish your milk supply, and how to properly latch baby to the breast.

Sign up at texaschildrenshealthplan.org/events/member/childbirth-education



Get the care you need

We want our expecting moms to have a great pregnancy. And that means it's important for you to go to the doctor. After all, a healthy mom and a happy baby begin with quality prenatal care!

Don't wait. Get seen right away. As soon as you think you're pregnant, you should schedule your first prenatal visit. Your OB/GYN will want to see you in your first trimester or within 42 days of joining Texas Children's Health Plan.

Don't forget about your postpartum checkup. It is also important for you to go for a postpartum checkup after having your baby. Your OB/GYN must see you within 3 to 6 weeks after delivery. To sign your newborn up for Medicaid, call 2-1-1 and report the birth of your child to Health and Human Services Commission or visit yourtexasbenefits.com.

Cervical Cancer Screening. Routine pap smears are a key to the prevention and early detection of cervical

cancer. Women ages 21–29 years should be tested every 3 years. For women ages 30–65, a pap smear with testing for human papillomavirus (HPV) every 5 years is preferred but screening with just a pap smear every 3 years is OK. Plan a visit with your doctor or local community clinic.

Mammography. Women are encouraged to talk with their doctor about screening for breast cancer with a mammogram. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends annual mammograms beginning at age 40. Early detection can lead to improved outcomes in women diagnosed with breast cancer. Plan a visit with your doctor or local community clinic.

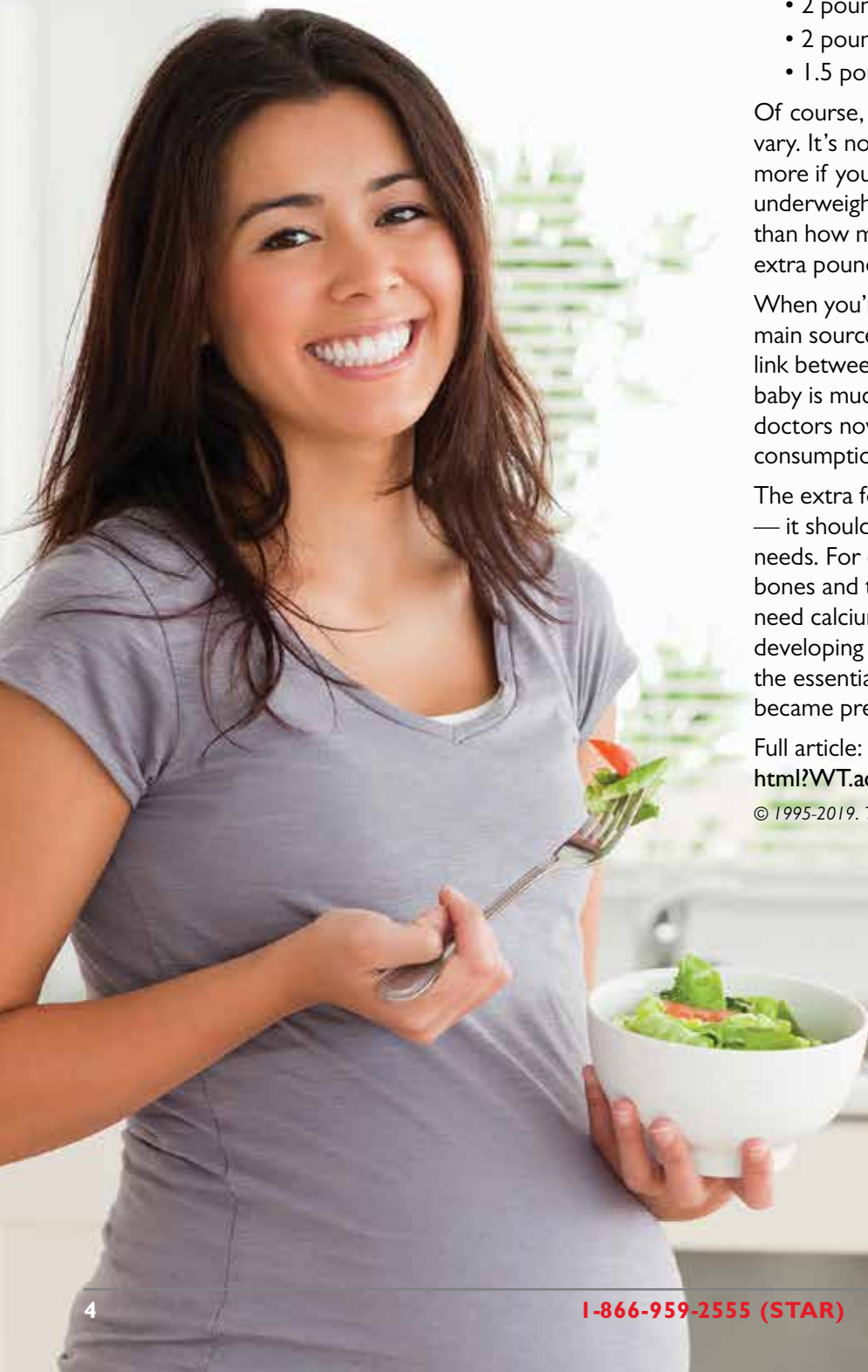
For help finding a doctor visit:

TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org under "Find a Doctor" or call Member Services at 1-866-959-2555 (STAR). For help scheduling an appointment, you can call Member Services, email us at HealthPlan@texaschildrens.org, or we can offer a 3-way call with you and the provider.

Eating during pregnancy

Eating well during pregnancy is not just about eating more. What you eat is as important.

You only need about 340 to 450 extra calories a day, and this is later in your pregnancy, when your baby grows quickly. This isn't a lot — a cup of cereal and 2% milk will get you there quickly. It's important is to make sure that the calories you eat come from nutritious foods that will help your baby's growth and development.



Eating well when you're pregnant

Do you wonder how it's reasonable to gain 25 to 35 pounds (on average) during your pregnancy when a newborn baby weighs only a fraction of that? Although it varies from woman to woman, this is how those pounds may add up:

- 7.5 pounds: average baby's weight
- 7 pounds: extra stored protein, fat, and other nutrients
- 4 pounds: extra blood
- 4 pounds: other extra body fluids
- 2 pounds: breast enlargement
- 2 pounds: enlargement of your uterus
- 2 pounds: amniotic fluid surrounding your baby
- 1.5 pounds: the placenta

Of course, patterns of weight gain during pregnancy vary. It's normal to gain less if you start out heavier and more if you're having twins or triplets — or if you were underweight before becoming pregnant. More important than how much weight you gain is what makes up those extra pounds.

When you're pregnant, what you eat and drink is the main source of nourishment for your baby. In fact, the link between what you consume and the health of your baby is much stronger than once thought. That's why doctors now say, for example, that no amount of alcohol consumption should be considered safe during pregnancy.

The extra food you eat shouldn't just be empty calories — it should provide the nutrients your growing baby needs. For example, calcium helps make and keep bones and teeth strong. While you're pregnant, you still need calcium for your body, plus extra calcium for your developing baby. Similarly, you require more of all the essential nutrients than you did before you became pregnant.

Full article: kidshealth.org/en/parents/eating-pregnancy.html?WT.ac=ctg#catpregnancy

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5 ways to avoid a C-section delivery

Sometimes things happen during your pregnancy that cause you to have to deliver by Cesarean, also known as a C-section. The good news? You can take steps to avoid it and have a healthy, natural delivery.

1. Ask questions. Some doctors and hospitals have higher C-section rates than others. Talk with your doctor about her goals for your pregnancy.
2. Did you know that you may be able to have a vaginal birth if you have had a C-section before? Not all women can try for a vaginal birth, so talk to your doctor and ask if she offers this choice and if it is right for you.
3. If you have a healthy pregnancy, wait until your baby is ready. The last weeks of pregnancy are uncomfortable. But don't ask to deliver before your baby is ready. Women who are induced before their baby is ready are more likely to need a C-section.
4. Stay at a healthy weight. Women who are obese before pregnancy are about twice as likely to need a C-section. Women who gain more weight in pregnancy are also more likely to need a C-section.
5. Wait. Give yourself time between your pregnancies. The best wait time is 18 months to reduce your risk of complications.

*Dr. Lisa Hollier
Chief Medical Officer of Obstetrics/Gynecology
Texas Children's Health Plan*



Is VBAC an option for you?

When a woman has her baby by cesarean delivery (C-section), her options for later pregnancies are either another C-section or to attempt a vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC). The best way to increase your chances of having a successful VBAC is to ask questions and discuss options with your doctor.

Because there are risks with repeat C-sections and VBAC, you should talk to your doctor to help you decide which option is best for you. VBAC may be possible if you have had 1 or 2 previous C-sections. Your doctor should discuss with you the risks and benefits of both VBAC and repeat C-section delivery.

Here are some benefits of a successful VBAC:

- It avoids major abdominal surgery, so there is less chance of bleeding and infection, as well as a shorter recovery period.
- It also helps reduce complications from having multiple, repeat C-sections.

Complications are still possible. But, most of these occur if a C-section becomes necessary during labor, for instance if the old incision (or cut) on the uterus tears open during labor.

Because of these risks, your doctor will look at factors that may affect your chance of having a successful VBAC. The size of family you are planning may affect your decision to attempt VBAC or have a repeat C-section. Your doctor will share the information with you so that you can make the best decision.

Not all hospitals and providers offer VBAC, so be sure to ask your doctor. If he doesn't offer the option of VBAC, ask for a referral to a hospital or practice that does.

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Measles: Here's what you need to know

It's true – we're (again) facing an outbreak of measles (rubeola) across the country this year.

What is measles and how do you get it?

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. The virus is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or airborne spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

The measles virus can remain infectious for up to two hours after an infected person leaves the area.

What are the symptoms?

In most cases, measles will start with fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes and sore throat. These are often followed by tiny white spots (Koplik's spots) inside the mouth and a distinct rash of small red spots starting at the hairline and spreading downward to cover most of the body. Unfortunately, measles can be deadly. Before widespread use of the vaccine, measles led to more than 2 million deaths per year.



Protect your child from measles!

Thankfully, you have the power to protect your children (and yourself) from this disease by getting vaccinated. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is very safe and effective. If you have questions about your child's vaccinations status, contact your health care provider today.

To read full article, visit: texaschildrens.org/blog/measles-here's-what-you-need-know

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Call our Nurse Help Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **1-800-686-3831** to speak with a registered nurse. For help picking a doctor, midwife, or OB/GYN, call Member Services at **1-866-959-2555 (STAR)**.

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