



Information for Patients & Caregivers

Antenatal, Intrapartum, and Postnatal Care in Low-Risk Pregnancy

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+ CARE BEFORE THE BIRTH (Antenatal)

Antenatal care is provided by skilled healthcare professionals (midwives, doctors, and other healthcare providers) to pregnant mothers to ensure the best health conditions for both mother and baby during pregnancy.

+ AT YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT

The health care provider will review your risks of developing pregnancy complications, including:

- **Your age.**
- **Blood relations with the father of the child** (consanguinity).
- **Current and past obstetric history:**
 - The number of pregnancies and children you have had.
 - Bleeding in this or previous pregnancies.
 - Previous caesarean section(s) or a delivery using instruments.
 - Placental problems.
 - Previous infections in pregnancy.
- **Chronic medical conditions:**
 - Diabetes mellitus.
 - Hypertension.
 - Thyroid disorders.
 - Infections like Hepatitis B and C.
- **Your weight.**
- **Your vaccination status.**
- **Smoking, alcohol consumption.**
- **Use of medication.**
- **Any allergies you may have.**

Talk to your doctor if you have severe nausea and vomiting, constipation, heartburn, varicose veins, back pain, leg cramps, or other symptoms.

+ AT EACH ANTENATAL APPOINTMENT

During each antenatal visit, you will receive support and guidance about your pregnancy.

Your healthcare provider will do a detailed examination and assessment of your conditions. He or she may request additional tests and ultrasound scans.

The doctor will advise you to take some supplements especially folic acid, iron tablets, and vitamin D if required.

Feel free to ask a healthcare provider any questions about your pregnancy. Share your concerns and how you are feeling.

If you have an uncomplicated low risk pregnancy, your health care provider will refer you for shared care with an obstetrician at 34 weeks gestation. If the pregnancy is complicated, you may be referred to an obstetrician earlier.

+ WEIGHT GAIN

Weight gain varies from woman to woman during pregnancy, but on average a woman will gain about 10-14kg.

Some of this weight will be lost after giving birth. It is important to avoid weight loss or excess weight gain during pregnancy.

To help you stay on track, your healthcare provider will monitor your weight during pregnancy and may give you specific advice, particularly if you are underweight or overweight.

ENSURE YOU WALK AT LEAST 30 MINUTES EVERYDAY.
CONTACT OR HIGH-IMPACT SPORTS MAY BE DANGEROUS.

+ CARE DURING LABOUR (Intrapartum)

Intrapartum care is the care provided during labour.

To ensure your safety and that of your baby, it is strongly advised that you give birth in a hospital setting, under the supervision of skilled healthcare provider.

+ DURING LABOUR

Every woman's experience of labour is different. There are three stages of labour. The time taken for each varies from one woman to another.

During the **First Stage of Labour**, you may experience irregular contractions in the beginning. This stage may last for 10-12 hours but can be longer especially in the latent phase. Be sure to ask your healthcare provider if you can move freely instead of laying down in bed. Request painkillers if you need them.

The **Second Stage of Labour** includes a full dilation of the cervix and the birth of the baby. It usually lasts for 2-3 hours.

In some cases, the healthcare provider may offer you an intravenous drip to help your uterus contract, if your labour is

Most women's waters break during labour, but this can happen before labour starts. If your waters break, you may feel a slow trickle, or a sudden gush of fluid and you will need to contact your healthcare provider.

During pregnancy, a thick plug of mucus forms in the cervix. As the body prepares for labour this plug may come away through the vagina. This can happen 1-2 weeks before labour, early in labour or sometimes this does not happen at all.

If you need pain relief during birth, it is important to discuss your options so that you can make an informed choice.

The **Third Stage of Labour** is when the placenta (afterbirth) is delivered. When this is complete you will be offered an injection to help the uterus to contract and then the baby will be handed to be placed on your skin.

Contact your health care provider or visit a hospital if you experience:

- Vaginal bleeding (that is not the 'show').
- A reduction in your baby's movement.
- Contractions that are becoming regular and strong.
- Constant abdominal pain.
- Sudden gush of water or water leaking from vagina.
- Being unwell, worried, or feeling something is wrong.

Contact Numbers for Local Hospitals:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| • WWRC | (+974) 4 026 1206 |
| • Al Wakra Hospital | (+974) 4 011 4444 |
| • Al Khor Hospital | (+974) 4 474 5555 |
| • Cuban Hospital | (+974) 4 015 7824 |

+ CARE AFTER LABOUR (Postnatal)

Postnatal care is provided to you and your baby for at least 8 weeks after the birth.

Occasionally, after your delivery significant conditions may occur:

- **Bleeding after the birth:** Heavy vaginal bleeding.
- **Infection:** Fever, sweating, feeling unwell.
- **Pre-eclampsia or eclampsia:** Headaches within 72 hours of birth with vomiting, nausea, or visual problems.
- **Blood clots:** Painful swelling of one leg or sudden sharp pain in the chest or sudden shortness of breath.
- **Mastitis:** Redness and swelling of a breast.

Consult a healthcare specialist if you notice these signs and symptoms.

If you are able, breastfeeding your baby for the first 6-12 month is encouraged to ensure ideal growth and development.

If prescribed by your doctor, take your iron and folic acid tablets for three months post-delivery.

Consult your doctor if you are taking any medication to ensure it is safe with breastfeeding.

Do not smoke and don't drink alcohol if you are breastfeeding.

+ TAKING CARE OF BABY

After birth, keep your baby warm with additional layers. Wear a hat if needed. Try to play and communicate with your baby.

The first bath should happen after 24 hours of birth. Keep the umbilical cord stump clean and dry, without the use of any chemicals.



+ VACCINATION OF BABY

Within the first 24 hours of birth, your baby will receive vitamin K and two vaccines:

- Hepatitis B vaccination.
- BCG vaccination.

Your baby will undergo a full examination within 72 hours of birth and prior to discharge from the hospital. After going home, your baby should be regularly reviewed to assess development and to ensure immunisations are given to protect the baby against infections.

Schedule your visits:

- 2 - 3 days after birth.
- 7 - 14 days after birth.
- 6 - 8 weeks after birth.

+ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on *Antenatal, Intrapartum, and Postnatal Care in Low-Risk Pregnancy* can be found in the National Clinical Guideline published by The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) Qatar.

The guideline is available to the public from the MoPH website: www.moph.gov.qa

