

# Planning Ahead for the Birth of Your Baby

The following are things you can do to get ready 6 to 8 weeks before your baby is due.

- Choose a baby doctor called a pediatrician or a family doctor for your baby.
- Think about taking childbirth education, breastfeeding and baby care classes to prepare you to care for your baby.
- Take a hospital tour. This helps you know where you will deliver your baby and gives you the chance to learn about the hospital's routines and policies.
- Fill out hospital forms and send them to the hospital. This will shorten the admission process when you are in labor.
- Put the car seat in your car. Have it checked or installed by a trained person. Call your local fire station or health department to see if they do car seat inspections. You cannot take your baby home from the hospital without a car seat. If you have limited income, check with your doctor or clinic to see if they have free or lower cost car seats available.
- Make plans for someone to care for your other children while you are in the hospital.
- Plan for help with housework and meals for a couple of weeks after your baby is born.
- Get the baby's room, crib and other items ready for use. Prepare a place to care for your baby such as diaper changing station on each floor of your home. Some parents put baby care items in a basket that can be carried from room to room.
- Pack your bag for the hospital.
- Plan childcare for your baby if you plan to return to work. Many childcare centers have long waiting lists.

**Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.**

2005 – 2/2011 Health Information Translations

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