

Getting ready to welcome your baby

October 2015 Newsletter



Today many couples say “we’re pregnant.” Yet the pregnant spouse or partner is often the focus of attention. She’s changing visibly. But her partner is expecting — and changing — too.

The parent who won’t be in labor still has a major role to play — before, during and after the birth of their child. That partner may not have stretch marks, but there will be lots of preparation, work and adjustment.

Helping your pregnant spouse or partner

It’s a happy and stressful time for Mom-to-be. Hormonal changes may lead to morning sickness and fatigue. There can be emotional ups and downs too. Here are some ways you can help:

- **Encourage her to take good care of herself and you do the same.** She’ll be advised to stay away from alcohol and cigarettes. Consider joining her as a sign of support — and for your own health, too.
- **If her doctor advises exercise, try walking or working out together.**
- **Encourage her to get enough rest.**
- **Go with her to as many prenatal doctor visits as you can.**
- **Visit the hospital maternity area where the birth is planned and attend childbirth classes together.** These are great opportunities to bond.

Taking care of yourself

Here are some things you can do for yourself during Mom’s pregnancy:

- **Read about babies and parenting.** You’ll get most of your training “on the job”. But it helps to have ideas about what to expect.

- **Notice others around you who seem like good parents.** What do they do — or not do — that makes them role models?
- **Mom’s health is being closely monitored.** What about yours? Get a check-up and tend to any health issues. You’ll soon have a baby who needs both parents!

Adjusting to new roles

Expect adjustment time as you move into your new roles. Here are some pointers to keep in mind:

- **Talk openly about hopes and fears — it’s natural for future parents to have both.**
- **Update your family affairs.** Life insurance, wills and plans about who will care for your child if both parents are ever unable to do so should all be in place. Baby needs medical insurance, too.
- **Work together on a budget built for three.** Add in expenses (clothing, food, medical, “other”) that come along with kids.
- **Find out about family leave options.** Will one or both of you be able to take time off from work?
- **Try to arrange to have support in the first weeks after the birth.** Is family nearby? Will they cook a meal or babysit a bit? As new parents, you’ll need some hands-on help and sleep.
- **Discuss career plans.** Will you both work once baby is here? Will you need child care? Have you started to look into the options and their costs?

Final tips

Keep your smartphone and camera handy — you’re about to have endless photo-ops. And remember: Parenting includes fun, hard work, challenges and rewards. Buckle up for the ride of your life!