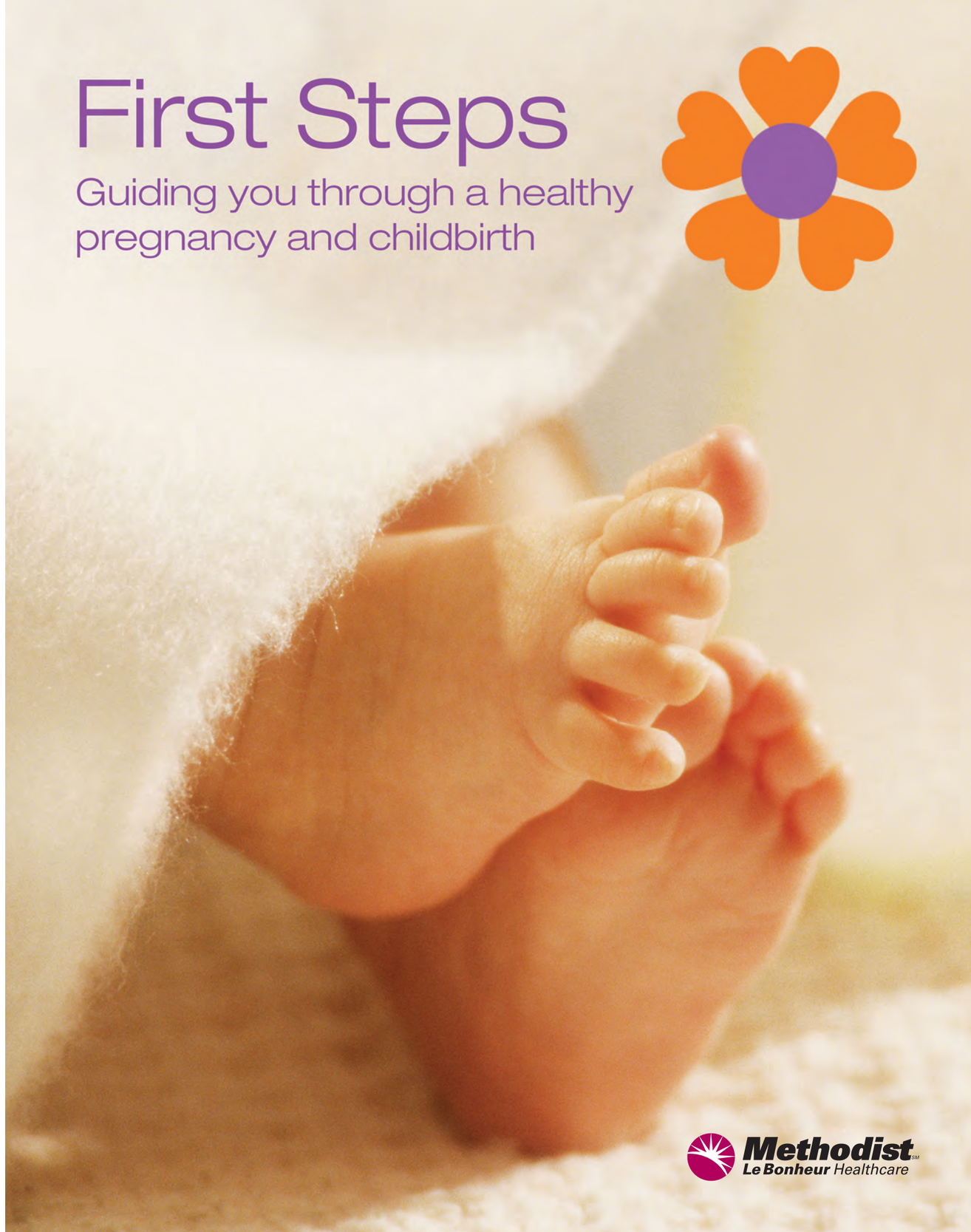
Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare

First Steps

Guiding you through a healthy pregnancy and childbirth



Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare

Notes

You're Counting Down the Days

There are few experiences in life that can rival giving birth and welcoming a new child into your family. Now that you're counting down the days to this exciting time, we hope that this guide will help answer some of those questions as you prepare for your newborn.

Before the Baby Comes:

Prenatal checklist 2
Childbirth class descriptions 3-4
Normal Vs. Dangerous Symptoms 5
Pre-registration Information 6
CarePages 7
Pack your suitcase 8
Pre-Registration Form 21-22

Preparing for Labor & Childbirth:

Frequently asked questions to help you know what to expect 9-12

Your hospital stay:

About the Women's & Children's Pavilion 13
Getting to know the Care Team. 14
Infant Security 14
Breastfeeding Support. 14
Rooming In & The Nursery 15
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. 15
Guests. 15
Frequently asked questions. 16-17

Methodist Support Services:

MOMS (Mothers of Methodist Support) 18
Grief Support 18
Childbirth Class Reunion 18
Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center 18
Methodist Sleep Center. 19
Car Seat Safety and Inspection Stations 19
Important Phone Numbers. 20

When you deliver, you will be given additional information to guide you through the first few weeks of your new life with your baby. If you have questions about any of our services, we encourage you to visit *methodisthealth.org/pavilion*. If you do not have Internet access or would rather speak to someone, please call **901.516.6645**.

Your doctor is the best source of information and advice about your pregnancy. The information about pregnancy and birth in this booklet is not intended to be a substitute for the medical care and advice of your doctor, which is based on your individual circumstances. Please visit your doctor regularly throughout your pregnancy. If you have questions or concerns about your pregnancy, please contact your doctor right away.

The Checklist

This trimester checklist is a guide to help you become prepared for the birth of your new baby. Descriptions of the items are provided on the following pages.

1st Trimester (0-12 weeks)

- ❑ Visit *www.methodisthealth.org* for prenatal information and interactive tools.
- ❑ Attend a Healthy Pregnancy Class.
- ❑ Schedule and keep OB visits.
- ❑ Become familiar with the danger signs of pregnancy.
- ❑ Pre-register for your delivery online at *www.methodisthealth.org* or mail in your pre-registration form.

2nd Trimester (13-27 weeks)

- ❑ Schedule and keep OB visits.
- ❑ Register for childbirth classes.
- ❑ Attend a Healthy Pregnancy Class.
- ❑ Discuss with your doctor whether or not you need a birth plan.

3rd Trimester (28-40 weeks)

- ❑ Choose a pediatrician and schedule an interview.
- ❑ Decide whether or not to choose circumcision if your baby is a boy.
- ❑ Become educated on the latest car seat requirements and have your carseat installed.
- ❑ Tour the Maternity Center at the Methodist Hospital where you will deliver. They are regularly conducted during your childbirth class or you can call Methodist Germantown to schedule.
- ❑ Call your insurance provider and make sure your paperwork is completed and updated. Ask when you will need to add your baby's name to the plan.
- ❑ Pack your hospital suitcase.

4th Trimester (Birth to six weeks after birth)

- ❑ Schedule your baby's check-up with the pediatrician.
- ❑ Schedule your check-up with your OB/GYN.
- ❑ Add your baby to your insurance plan (usually within 30 days of birth).
- ❑ Send off for the birth certificate.
- ❑ Send off for the social security card.
- ❑ Attend Mothers of Methodist Support Group (MOMS).

Please mail the form during your first trimester. Insurance will be verified 30 days prior to due date. Mail the form to the hospital where you will deliver:

Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital
Admissions / Maternity
7691 Poplar Ave.
Germantown, Tennessee 38138

Before the Baby Comes

Childbirth and other Class Offerings

Methodist offers a range of convenient classes during and after pregnancy to help you and your family prepare for your new arrival. Prepared Childbirth Classes are important to:

- Help parents feel more knowledgeable about labor and birth.
- Help decrease mom's anxiety about the experience to come.
- Help the support person know what to do and when to do it.

When Should I Take Classes?

- Try to complete your childbirth classes one month prior to your due date.
- **It is best to register during your fifth month to ensure enrollment in your preferred class.**

Prepared Childbirth: Seven Week Series

Class 1: Discuss discomforts, danger signs, true labor vs. false labor and the terminology pertaining to the last weeks of pregnancy. You will come away knowing what is normal and abnormal.

Class 2: This is the labor class. The stages of labor and variations are discussed. Participants will view natural and epidural-based deliveries and discuss them.

Class 3: This is the hospital class. This class prepares patients and support persons for hospital admission, consent forms, what to bring, etc. Pain medication is also discussed (IVs vs epidurals). Participants will tour the Labor & Delivery, Postpartum, and Nursery areas.

Class 4: This is the "what if" class. Your instructor will discuss unplanned C-section inductions, what happens if your baby experiences complications, episiotomy, etc. What to expect and how to prepare for the postpartum period is also discussed. Classes 1-4 end with breathing and relaxation demonstrations.

Class 5: This is a two hour Baby Basics class. The first hour discusses how your baby will be cared for in the hospital and the procedures that take place. The second hour is a hands-on experience in caring for your newborn, including feeding, changing diapers, holding, burping, and more.

Class 6: This is a two hour breastfeeding class. Benefits and advantages to breastfeeding for the entire family are discussed. The instructor will demonstrate proper positioning, correct latch on, and provide valuable information for successful breastfeeding.

Class 7: This is an Infant CPR and safety class. Facts on safety at home, going outside, medications and illnesses are presented. Basic first aid and when to call 911 are also discussed. Instructional techniques and demonstrations of caring for a choking infant are presented.

From Pregnancy to Parenthood in a Day: This one-day condensed class is fast paced and focuses on a review of the labor process and common hospital procedures. A condensed version of the postpartum, baby basics, breastfeeding, breathing, relaxation, and coping skills are discussed. A tour of the Women's and Children's Pavilion is provided. The class is offered on selected Saturdays from 8:15 am to 4:30 pm. Visit *methodisthealth.org* or call **901.516.6645** to register.

Before the Baby Comes

Breastfeeding Basics
This is a two hour breastfeeding class. Benefits and advantages to breastfeeding for the entire family are discussed. The instructor will demonstrate proper positioning, correct latch-on, and provide valuable information for successful breastfeeding. Breastfeeding Basics is included in the Prepared Childbirth class or it may be taken separately.

Infant Safety and CPR
This class will teach you the basic techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for infants. You will receive classroom instruction and demonstration, and will have the opportunity to practice your CPR skills with the instructors. Basic infant safety is also discussed. This class is purely instructional and does not result in any certification.

Celebrate Siblings Class
This class is for children ages 2-12 who are expecting a new little brother or sister. The class will include a film, hands-on games and activities, snacks and a tour of the Maternity Center. All children should be accompanied by an adult.

Celebrate Siblings Package
You can order this packet for your children to help prepare them for your new arrival. Included are activities for you to do with your child and a “Big Brother” or “Big Sister” T-shirt. The package is mailed directly to your child, so please be sure to give us his or her name and shirt size when ordering. You may order by calling **901.516.6645**.

The Grandparent Connection
This two hour class is designed for grandparents-to-be of any age. It is intended to give grandparents a chance to identify how things have changed since they became parents. The class will discuss the role of the grandparenting connection as well as how grandparents can help during the pregnancy, birth and beyond.

Gestational Diabetes Education Class
This class is for women who have developed gestational diabetes during their pregnancy. This Class is three hours long and offered on Tuesdays 1-4 p.m. Please contact Kristy Merritt BSN, RN, CDE or Amanda Carmichael BS, RD, LDN at **901.516.6616/516.6357** for more information.

Return to Work Breastfeeding Class
Designed to help mothers to continue to breastfeed, this individual session will help moms who are returning to work or school. The class focuses on how to create a plan for breastfeeding, pumping and storing. This session can be taken before or after your baby arrives, and at least three weeks before returning to work. Your baby is welcome to come with you.

Mind Over Body
This two hour class is designed to provide information and practice for preparation in natural childbirth. This class teaches breathing and relaxation techniques to decrease anxiety for all delivery situations. Mind Over Body is free if you are already enrolled in a prepared childbirth class.

Baby Basics
This two hour class covers basic infant care, growth and development. Cord and circumcision care, sleeping and eating habits during the first few weeks are discussed. Baby Basics is included in the Prepared Childbirth class or it may be taken independently.

Methodist Healthcare

Due Date _____

OB Doctor's Name _____
(*Doctor's name must be provided to complete registration)

PATIENT INFORMATION

1. Name _____
Last Name First Middle Maiden Name

2. Address _____
Street Number and Name Apt # City State Zip Home Phone # Cell Phone #

3. Age ( ) _____ Marital Status _____ Race _____
Birth Date

4. Patient's Employer _____
Address
Phone #

5. Patient's Social Security # _____

6. Church Preference _____ Previous Admission _____
Denomination Date Patient Name

7. Next of Kin _____
Last Name First Relation to Patient Phone #

Emergency Contact _____
Last Name First Relation to Patient Phone #
(Person to notify in emergency other than spouse or relative not living with you.)

RESPONSIBLE PARTY INFORMATION

8. Name _____
Last Name First Middle Relationship to Patient

9. Address _____
Street Number and Name Apt.# City State Zip Phone #

10. Date of Birth _____ Social Security # _____

11. Employer _____
Employer's Address Phone#

INSURANCE INFORMATION **Attach a copy of Insurance Card (front & back)**

	PRIMARY COVERAGE	SECONDARY COVERAGE
Insured Name		
Social Security Number		
Insurance Company		
Address		
City/State/Zip		
Phone Number		
Policy Number		
Group Number		
Pre-certification Phone#		
Verification Phone#		

PS000286.0909 REV

Important Phone Numbers

Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital

Main Hospital Number 901.516.6418

Billing 901.516.1000

Breastfeeding Assistance 901.516.6893

Breast Pump Rental 901.516.6893

Prenatal & Childbirth Classes 901.516.6645

The Women's and Children's Pavilion 901.516.6788

Insurance & Pre-Registration Questions 901.516.6966

MOMS Support Group 901.516.6907

Grief Support 901.516.6907

Car Seat Checks 901.516.6645

Medical Records for Mom & Baby 901.516.2414

Know the Danger Signs During Pregnancy

Most pregnant women do not experience complications, but it's important for you to familiarize yourself with potentially dangerous symptoms in the event that you need to seek care. Reasons to immediately call your doctor or go to the emergency room include:

- Contractions of the uterus or baby balling up (more than five in an hour before 37 weeks).
- Vaginal bleeding.
- Severe headaches, dizziness or problems seeing.
- Leaking or gushing fluid from your vagina.
- Chills and fever over 100°F.
- Severe pain or cramps in your back or abdomen.
- The baby's movement slows down or stops.
- Pain or burning during urination.

Normal Symptoms versus Potentially Dangerous Symptoms

Normal Symptoms	Dangerous Symptoms
Headache that is relieved by rest and acetaminophen	Strong headache from which you get no relief
Mild nausea, heartburn, diarrhea or constipation	Vomiting that lasts for 12 hours; unable to keep anything in your stomach for 24 hours; severe upper abdominal pain
Swollen feet at the end of the day; gradual weight gain during pregnancy	Swollen face, hands and feet or sudden weight gain of 3-5 pounds
Feeling lightheaded if you haven't eaten or if you change position suddenly	Fainting or blacking out
Feeling hot or flushed	Fever over 100.4°
Frequent urination	Burning when you urinate
Pink or reddish tinged vaginal discharge at the end of pregnancy	Flow of bright, red blood as in a menstrual period
Contractions of the uterus: high in front; tightening feeling (indicating Braxton-Hicks contractions)	If less than 37 weeks, five or more contractions in one hour after resting and taking fluids
Baby moves throughout the day; may take rest periods	Sudden decrease in baby's movement or no movement

Pre-Register for Your Hospital Stay

Pre-registration can make your check-in at the hospital easy and save valuable time. You may pre-register online at *www.methodisthealth.org* through the link on the home page, or you may complete the form located on page 21 of this packet. Please mail the form during your first trimester. Insurance will be verified 30 days prior to due date. Mail the form to the hospital where you will deliver:

Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital
Admissions / Maternity
7691 Poplar Ave.
Germantown, Tennessee 38138

When you arrive in labor at the hospital, simply give your name and your registration information will be available. For questions regarding pre-registration at Methodist Germantown, call **901.516.6966**.

Choose a Car Seat

Use of a child car seat is a Tennessee State Law. For the latest information about car seat requirements, call the Safe Kids Coalition in Memphis at **901.287.6730** or contact the 24-hour Shelby County Health Department Car Seat Information Hotline: **901.544.7362**. Visit safekids.org for information and events in our area. Car seat Safety and Inspection stations are listed at the end of this book.

Discuss your Birth Plan with your OB

Talk to your doctor about the type of birth experience you would like to have. The standard birth plan most hospitals use is beneficial for most people; however, this experience is special and should be carried out in a way that's best for you and your baby. Discuss birth planning with your doctor. If you decide to vary from a standard birth plan, your plan must be in writing and have your OB/GYN's signature and possibly your pediatrician's signature as well. You must bring this signed birth plan with you to the hospital when you deliver.

Tour Your Hospital

Attending childbirth preparation classes is the best way to become familiar with the hospital and its procedures. Individual tours of our maternity centers are available. Refer to Important Phone Numbers at the end of this guide.

Double Check Your Insurance

Call your insurance provider to make sure your paperwork is complete and nothing has changed. Insurance coverage is different for everyone. Check with your insurance company to find out the details of your coverage. For example, ask whether a circumcision or hearing screen will be covered. You may be required to pay your co-pay prior to arriving at the hospital. If your insurance plan changes, please notify the Methodist Pre-Registration representative. Methodist Healthcare will file your hospital bill directly with your insurance company. Find out from your insurance company when you will need to add your baby's name to your policy to be sure the baby's health costs are covered.

Methodist Sleep Center

For most women, pregnancy is a time of great joy, excitement and anticipation. However, for many it can also be a time of serious sleep disturbance, even for women who have never had problems sleeping. Many women also report feeling extremely fatigued during pregnancy, especially during the first and third trimesters. Considering the physical and emotional demands of pregnancy and the prevalence of sleep disorders among pregnant women, it's no wonder that expectant mothers become so tired.

The good news about most of the sleep problems experienced by pregnant women is that they tend to go away once the baby is born, but women should still pay close attention to their sleep after they give birth as new sleep problems may arise. If you think you may have a sleep disorder, talk to your doctor about your concerns.

Visit the Methodist Sleep Disorders Center at *www.methodisthealth.org/sleep* for more information, or call **901.683.0044**.

Tennessee Child and Infant Car Seat Safety Inspection Stations

Please call one of the following locations for an appointment:

Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital
Perinatal Services Department
Contact: Cathy Akin, RN, CPS Technician
7705 Poplar Ave.
Germantown, TN 38138
901.516.6645

M.C. Outreach Learning Center
Contact: Maurice Jefferson
963 Mississippi Blvd.
Memphis, TN 38126
901.463.5891

Safe Kids Mid-South
Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center
Contact: Susan Helmes
850 Poplar Ave., Building 1
Memphis, TN 38105
901.287.6730

Child Passenger Office
901.867.1358

MOMS - Mothers of Methodist Support

Your need for emotional support of friends and other mothers in your same situation are greatest immediately after your baby is born. MOMS has been created as an opportunity for you to bring your baby, your concerns and questions pertaining to your new experience as a mother. Please see the Important Numbers listing to call for times and locations.

Grief Support

If you have experienced the loss of a pregnancy or birth, you are probably experiencing one of the most difficult times of your life. Although we cannot take your pain away, the staff at Methodist hopes that we can provide you with access to support persons and groups who may be able to help. Please do not hesitate to contact any of the following:

Support Group: "In His Arms"

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Memphis Public Library, Poplar/White Station Branch, 5094 Poplar Avenue from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All parents attending have experienced a similar loss. This includes support for mothers, fathers and grandparents. **For additional grief support resources or information please contact Perinatal Support Services at 901.516.6907**.

Childbirth Class Reunion

If you attend either of the Prepared Childbirth classes, you will be able to reunite with the other parents in your class. An invitation will be mailed to you.

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital

Le Bonheur is the Mid-South's premier pediatric hospital and operates the region's only pediatric emergency department and pediatric intensive care unit. A licensed, fully accredited 225-bed center, it is recognized as the region's pediatric specialty referral center and cares for 100,000 children each year. Part of the Methodist Healthcare family, Le Bonheur serves a 95-county area in six states and has satellite facilities in East Memphis, Germantown, Cordova and Southeast Memphis. Satellite facilities include an inpatient pediatric unit at The Women's and Children's Pavilion at Methodist Germantown Hospital, pediatric subspecialty clinics, a diagnostic center, two urgent care centers and a same-day outpatient surgery center.

Le Bonheur is home to the Center for Children & Parents, Le Bonheur Early Intervention and Development, Children's Foundation of Memphis Research Center, Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition and the Memphis City Schools Coordinated School Health Program.

In 2010, Le Bonheur will open the doors of its new facility, located on the campus of the existing hospital in the Memphis Medical Center. The $340-million, 610,000-square-foot hospital will double Le Bonheur's current space for patient care, research and teaching.

The Women's Boutique

Located inside the lobby of the Women's and Children's Pavilion at Methodist Germantown, this unique boutique features specialty products for women of all ages. For new and expecting mothers, the boutique offers an array of breast pumps and support products. For more information, call **901.516.6504**.

Well Baby Services offered at Outpatient Pediatric Rehabilitation

Through our outpatient pediatric rehabilitation program, Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital offers a wide array of helpful services for your newborn.

Infant massage classes are a great way to connect with your baby and can offer numerous benefits from easing congestion, gas and colic to helping self-regulate calmness, which reduces crying.

Our team of therapists is also available to provide a variety of assessments including typical developmental skills, nutrition and handling picky eaters, speech and hearing screenings and balance and coordination assessments. **For more information, call 901.516.6925**.

Visit the Methodist Web site: methodisthealth.org

The Methodist Web site has important information for you and your family. Here you will learn everything from what to expect in the hospital and information for a healthy pregnancy, to information on preparing yourself for a new baby and pictures of our maternity centers.

Highlights include:

- Up to date class information.
- Browse through our online health encyclopedia for the latest on pregnancy, birth and infant health topics and tips.
- Pre-register your hospital stay.
- Start your own private and secure **CarePages** blog, enabling you to share your story and build a support network with friends and family.

CarePages

There are many ways to share the news of your pregnancy and the birth of your child online now, but many women would prefer to share this information with only their friends and family – instead of the entire online community. CarePages Web sites are free, secure, Web site templates that allow you to only share information with the people you choose. Their easy templates make it fun to share pictures and stories during and after your pregnancy.

This free service allows you to:

- Update family, friends and even colleagues all at once
- Share photos
- Collect supporting messages from loved ones and friends
- Learn more about healthcare issues
- Connect to others with similar concerns

To start a CarePage, go to *methodisthealth.org* and click on the CarePage icon on our homepage.

Before the Baby Comes

Pack Your Hospital Suitcase

Use this checklist to help you get ready for your hospital stay.

Clothes & items for mom:

- ❑ Night Gown
- ❑ Robe
- ❑ Nursing bra or snug-fitting bra for moms who will not nurse
- ❑ Loose-fitting clothes to wear home

Clothes & items for baby:

- ❑ T-shirt and a diaper
- ❑ Special outfit for pictures and for going home
- ❑ Blanket
- ❑ Cap if the weather is cold

Personal care items:

- ❑ Toothbrush
- ❑ Toothpaste
- ❑ Hairbrush
- ❑ Shampoo
- ❑ Camera - for the first precious pictures

Registration information:

- ❑ Insurance card
- ❑ Personal identification
- ❑ Social Security numbers - for registration and baby's birth certificate
- ❑ Any medication prescribed by your doctor that you take regularly. Bring it in the prescription bottle and tell the nurse who checks you in what it is.
- ❑ Infant car seat - for baby's first ride home
- ❑ This prenatal guide! The information in this guide will be useful to you during your experience at the hospital.

Do not bring:

- ❑ Jewelry and other valuables.
- ❑ Other children - unless you have an adult (who is not your support person) who can care for them at the hospital.

Your Hospital Stay

When will my baby boy be circumcised? Who will do the circumcision?

Usually, your obstetrician will circumcise your baby boy within 24-hours after he is born. You will sign a special permission form for this procedure. Check with your baby's insurance plan and your doctor to see if this procedure is covered. Your nurse will show you how to care for the circumcision.

Who should I call with questions after we leave the hospital?

Questions about your baby's health can be answered by your baby's doctor or the staff at his or her office. If you have concerns about your own condition, call your obstetrician.

How do I obtain medical records for myself or my baby?

A medical release form will need to be submitted to our Health Information Management department. You can find the form online at *www.methodisthealth.org*, or call **901.516.2414** for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions: After the Baby is Born

How soon will I go home?

Most moms and babies are ready and happy to go home the next day after the baby is born. Home is the best place for rest, recovery, and getting to know your new baby. Insurance plans are different, but most mothers who have had a vaginal delivery go home 24-48 hours after birth. Mothers who have had a C-section usually go home three days after birth. Your doctor and the baby's doctor will send you home only when you are medically ready to leave the hospital.

When can I breastfeed my baby?

Your baby's sucking instinct is strongest during the first hour after birth. Your nurse will work with you to get the baby ready to breastfeed as soon as possible, within the first hour if mother and baby are doing fine. Then, you may breastfeed any time your baby is hungry. Your nurses will help you.

If I decide not to breastfeed, can I get a shot or pills to dry up the milk?

No medicine is given routinely to dry up milk. While medicines were often given in the past, recent research has found that those medicines increase the risk of disease later in life. To help the milk dry up, wear a tight fitting bra all the time, don't touch or squeeze your nipples, and use ice packs to help with soreness. It will take several days for the milk to dry up and the swelling of your breasts to go away.

What is routinely done for a new baby at the hospital?

- The cord is cut and clamped at delivery. Later the cord is wiped with an antiseptic to help it dry up.
- Antibiotic medicine is applied to the baby's eyes to prevent infection, as required by state law.
- The baby will receive a Vitamin K shot to help the blood's ability to clot.
- The baby will be bathed and his temperature will be checked closely. Babies are frequently placed in a specially warmed bed to help regulate temperature.
- Blood may be taken from a prick in the baby's heel to check blood sugar.
- When the baby is 24 hours old, blood is taken from a heel prick for the newborn screen, as required by Tennessee law. You may be asked to take the baby to the pediatrician after you leave the hospital to have this test repeated.
- The nurses caring for your baby will answer any questions you have. If your baby is healthy and stable, you may breastfeed any time you want.
- Your baby's doctor will come to the hospital soon after the baby is born to check the baby.
- Your baby will be given a hearing screen before discharge. A consent form will need to be signed for this procedure.
- Your baby's doctor may order your baby's first Hepatitis B vaccine which is part of the scheduled immunizations.

Frequently Asked Questions

For questions about your pregnancy, your doctor is always the first person to ask. Many moms have questions about labor, the hospital and the new baby, which are answered in childbirth class. Here are some commonly asked questions and answers.

What if I feel contractions early, before the baby is due?

Before 37 weeks of pregnancy, if you feel five or more contractions in an hour, even if they don't hurt, you should call your doctor. Most women feel baby's movement and contractions, or tightening of the uterus, throughout pregnancy. These contractions are often called false labor contractions — false, because they don't lead to the birth of the baby. Most of the time, these contractions are normal, and help the uterus get strong in preparation for the work of labor. However, if you have regular contractions, more than five in one hour, and you are less than 37 weeks pregnant, you should call your doctor right away.

How will I know this is real labor, not false labor?

You are in true labor when your contractions are dilating, or opening the cervix; or when the amniotic membrane, your bag of water, breaks. The only way to know for sure is to go to the doctor's office or hospital where your cervix can be checked. When you are not sure, or have questions, call your doctor's office. Remember, before 37 weeks of pregnancy, if you feel regular contractions, or more than five in an hour, even if they don't hurt, call your doctor right away.

- If you think you may be in labor, pay attention to the nature of your contractions.
- When you are 37 weeks pregnant or more, watching and waiting is the best test. True labor won't go away, no matter what you do. False labor will eventually stop.
- Time your contractions, from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next. Write them down for about an hour.
- Look for a pattern. Are they consistently between 5 and 6 minutes apart, or is the time between contractions varied, first 5 minutes, then 2 minutes, then 10 minutes, then 8 minutes for example? True labor contractions will develop a pattern, and over a few hours, get closer together and more uncomfortable – longer, stronger and closer together.
- Take a walk. True labor contractions usually become harder and stronger with activity. False labor contractions often go away or become much weaker with activity such as walking.
- How do they feel? True labor contractions most often start in the back, move to the front very low over your pubic bone, and then go away slowly, moving back. False labor contractions are often felt high and in the front; it may feel like the baby is balling up.
- Wait awhile. True labor will get stronger and more uncomfortable. False labor will go away or become less noticeable.

If I want it, when can I get an epidural?

Epidural anesthesia is often used to relieve the pain of labor. You and your doctor will evaluate your condition and your discomfort before deciding it is time for the epidural. For most, it is available soon after you ask for it. However, it will not be given as soon as you arrive at the hospital. The general guidelines are:

- You and your baby must be managing labor contractions well.
- You must have an IV in place and the required lab work results must be verified by anesthesia personnel.

Can I change my mind about pain medicine or epidural?
Yes! Each labor is different. Being prepared means being ready to deal with your labor however it feels. It's OK to start out with one plan and change your mind. However, even if you're not planning on having an epidural, be sure you sign the epidural permission form anyway. It does not mean you will receive one, but will allow you to receive one in the case you change your mind as your labor progresses. Your nurse and your doctor will help you know what's available.

Do I need an enema before going to the hospital?
The answer to this question differs from patient to patient and from physician to physician. Discuss the use of an enema with your doctor.

What if there is an emergency and I need a Cesarean section?
Your nurse is constantly aware of your contractions and how your baby is doing. She is talking regularly with your doctor. In case of an emergency, or when the decision is made that a Cesarean delivery will be needed, your doctor will explain the reasons. The anesthesia staff, obstetrician and neonatology staff are available 24 hours a day, so C-sections can be performed at any time.

Can my support person come to the operating room for a C-section?
Most doctors allow your support person to be present for Cesarean delivery, when mother and baby are doing well. Sometimes, when the support partner is not comfortable about going into the operating room or when there is a medical emergency or Mom has general anesthesia, the support person waits in the waiting room while the baby is delivered.

How should I prepare for a scheduled induction or a C-section?
If you have a scheduled induction or C-section, do not eat or drink after midnight before your appointment at the hospital. If you do, the procedure may have to be postponed.

Do I have to have an episiotomy?
Episiotomy is the cut the doctor makes to enlarge the vaginal opening. Many women, especially first-time moms, have an episiotomy. If you do not have an epidural, a numbing shot is given. After birth, the episiotomy is stitched closed. The stitches dissolve a week or so after birth. Talk with your doctor if you want to avoid an episiotomy.

When is it time to go to the hospital?
Ask your doctor first. The general rule for those more than 37 weeks pregnant is that you should go to the hospital when:

- your contractions are 4-5 minutes apart and have been steady for an hour, or
- your water breaks.

Do I need to call the hospital first?
No, the Maternity Centers are open 24 hours a day, fully staffed and ready to care for you when you arrive.

What if I go to the hospital too early?
Early labor is the longest part of labor. For most, there is no need to be at the hospital during this time, unless your water has broken. If you come to the hospital in early labor, your doctor may send you home where you will be more comfortable. Spend this time resting, watching TV or a movie, taking a walk or other activities to help the time pass. Eat very lightly and drink plenty of fluids. Many women come to the hospital, only to be sent home, so it is nothing to be embarrassed about.

Rooming In & The Nursery
After your baby is born you will be excited, emotional, and tired. You will begin breastfeeding right away. Keeping your baby in your room with you, or rooming in, is a great way to learn about your baby, become comfortable caring for him or her, and to rest and relax together. Our nursing staff will help you care for your baby in your room so you won't be on your own. The nursery is used for hearing evaluations, pediatrician examinations and circumcisions. Your baby can sleep in the nursery between visits and will be cared for by our nursing staff while you recover.

NICU – Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
Sometimes babies arrive too early or may need extra attention before going home. We are very proud of our level III neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and the benefits it offers to families. This level III NICU features private rooms with sleeper sofas or chairs where families are able to stay with their new infant 24/7. Rooms are monitored closely by our nursing staff and a neonatal specialist that is on staff at the hospital at all times. New mothers will have privacy to breastfeed and/or pump, allowing them to bond with their newborn. There are also private rooms to accommodate families with multiples.

Birth Certificate
Before you leave the hospital, a staff member will help you complete the form for the baby's birth certificate. This must be completed before you leave the hospital. In addition to the baby's name, you will need your social security number. If you are not married, paternity papers may be completed. The baby's father will need a photo ID and his social security number. If you or the father are under 18, your parent and/or the father's parent must also sign. This is not a certified copy of Birth Certificate. You may obtain a copy of your child's birth certificate through the Tennessee Office of Vital Records - phone: **615.741.1763** or visit *vitalchek.com*.

Newborn Photography Services
Our365.com offers every mom the opportunity to have her baby's portrait taken free at the hospital, with no obligation to purchase. Please ask your nurse if you would like a photographer to take your baby's newborn portrait during your hospital stay. You may opt to have the photo placed in the free, secure online nursery at *Our365.com*, allowing you to share your special moment with friends and family around the world. *Our365.com* offers many additional services as well, from birth announcements to keepsake products. Visit *Our365.com*, or look for the link on the Methodist Web site.

Guests
We realize how important it is to have your family and friends close by. Guests are welcome anytime after checking in with the front desk. Siblings of the new baby may also visit. Be sure they are not sick and there is an adult available to care for them. We want your baby's birth to be special and enjoyable for the whole family.

Getting to know the Care Team

There will be many people coming in and out of your room once you are in the hospital to help take care of you and your baby. You can expect visits from:

Nurses provide bedside care for you and your baby, whether in your room or in the nursery. A nurse will care for you during labor, will be present for the delivery of the baby, will help you begin breastfeeding, and will take care of you and baby during your hospital stay.

The Unit Secretary is usually the first person you'll see. The unit secretary helps keep records, welcome visitors and answer your requests.

Patient Care Assistants and Technicians assist the nurses and doctors caring for you.

Anesthesia Staff are available 24 hours a day to provide epidural anesthesia for pain relief during labor and birth, and anesthesia for Cesarean delivery.

Obstetricians care for you during pregnancy and birth. Your obstetric doctor, or his or her partners, will be in regular contact with the hospital nurses monitoring your condition, will check on you during labor, and be present for the delivery of the baby.

Pediatricians are the doctors who care for babies and children. The nursery staff will notify your pediatrician once the baby arrives. Pediatricians and neonatologists are available when needed.

Environmental services, food service, maintenance and security associates are some of the hundreds of the men and women working behind the scenes to take care of you and your family.

Infant Security

Safety and security for you and your baby are top priority at Methodist. Our guidelines are set and enforced in accordance with those created for hospitals by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. You will be educated about the security procedures and policies when you arrive at the hospital. In addition, you can expect to see the following:

- Controlled Access - coded locks and security systems in the nurseries, labor and delivery and maternity areas help us know who is coming and going.
- Staff Identification - maternity center staff members wear ID badges with a special symbol for easy identification.
- Foot and Fingerprints - a record of your finger print along with your baby's footprints will be made at birth for the baby's records.
- Baby ID - a special card will be made for you and your baby. You and your baby will also wear identification bracelets with matching numbers.

Breastfeeding Support

Helping mother and baby with breastfeeding is just one way the specially trained nurses at Methodist will take care of you during your hospital stay. Most moms and babies are ready to nurse within the first 30 - 60 minutes after birth when baby's sucking instinct is the strongest. Nurses and lactation consultants are available and accessible during your hospital stay to help you. A good start will help you enjoy the benefits of breastfeeding.

What if the baby comes too fast and is born before I get to the hospital?

This is a common fear of expectant parents, but the least common complication. Most women have plenty of time to get to the hospital. If you discover the baby is arriving right away, call 911 for emergency assistance.

What forms will I sign and what are they for?

When you are admitted to the hospital, your nurse will give you several permission forms to sign. It is important that you read and understand the information on each form. If you have questions or don't understand something, ask your nurse to explain it to you. It is important to read and sign the forms as soon as you are admitted, because the pain and work of labor, along with any drugs you may receive during labor, will make it difficult for you to understand the information on the permission forms. Signing the forms means you understand the information printed on the form and you give the hospital staff and doctors permission to take care of you and your baby.

You will see these permission forms:

- *Permission to deliver the baby, either vaginally or by C-section* – this does not mean that you will have a C-section. It simply means your doctor and hospital have your permission to care for you and deliver the baby in whatever way is best for you and the baby. If you do need to have a Cesarean delivery, your doctor will discuss it with you first.
- *Permission to administer epidural anesthesia* – Signing this form means that you understand the information on the form. It is not a request for an epidural, and it is not a guarantee that you will need or want one If the form is not signed, an epidural anesthetic will not be available to you.
- *Permission to circumcise your baby boy* – Circumcision is usually done by your obstetrician. Check with your doctor and with your insurance plan before you come to the hospital to determine if this procedure is covered. Also, discuss your plans for circumcision with your partner before the baby is born to eliminate any last minute confusion.
- *Permission to perform a tubal ligation or to "tie your tubes"*– This is a surgical procedure that makes a woman sterile (unable to have more children). It is a permanent form of birth control. Discuss this procedure with your physician. If you do plan to have a tubal ligation, you will sign this permission form. You must have discussed this procedure with your doctor before you come to the hospital. If you do not plan to have your tubes tied at this time, you will not sign this permission form.
- *Permission to release information to newborn photography company* – You will be asked to sign a form if you choose to have your baby's photo taken by the newborn photography company.

Do I have to have an IV and fetal monitor?
The fetal monitor and IV are routine procedures for most patients in this part of the country. Many doctors feel that it is safe for mother and baby to have the IV in place in case medicines are needed quickly. The fetal monitor ensures that the baby's condition is checked at all times. If either of these routine procedures concerns you, you should talk to your doctor before you enter the hospital.

Can I eat or drink when in labor?
Most doctors recommend you stop eating when you realize you are in true labor. Eat and drink lightly if you think you may be labor. Many women become nauseated and vomit during labor. It is important you get plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. Sip clear liquids or eat popsicles or ice during the early part of labor to stay comfortable. When you are admitted to the hospital, the IV will enable fluids to be given directly, and ice chips are available if your doctor allows.
The good news is most laboring women are not hungry!

Do I have to stay in bed while I'm in labor?
During the early part of labor, when you will probably be at home, most women like to move around, walk, rock in a rocking chair, sit and watch television or listen to music. Changing positions frequently and moving will help you stay comfortable and help keep your labor moving. Remember, the baby is moving down, so positions like standing and sitting up make it easier for the downward movement to occur.

What about at the hospital, will I have to stay in bed during labor?
When you are admitted to the hospital, the IV will be placed in a vein in your arm, and the fetal monitor will record your contractions and the baby's heartbeat. If your doctor allows it, and you and your baby are doing well with the work of labor, you may sit up in the bed, or on the side of the bed, or sit in a chair in your birthing room. Some mothers even like to stand beside the bed or walk around the room. While many women prefer to stay in bed once they arrive at the hospital, you may ask your nurse to help you find the most comfortable position for you.

Can I have visitors during labor?
If you choose to and your doctor approves, support people may join you while in labor. A limited number of people may be allowed in the birthing room. Labor is hard work, and most women are not ready to talk and visit. While hospital policy does not prohibit visitors during labor, you are encouraged to have only one or two support people there to help you. You may visit with friends and family after the baby has been born.

I want to have my baby without an epidural or other kinds of pain medicine. Can I do that?
Many women deliver babies with no medicine for pain. If you want to give birth without medication, it is important to prepare ahead of time and to learn basic techniques that will help you during labor. Relaxation, controlled breathing and the help of a support partner are very important. Taking classes, watching videos, and practicing will help make these techniques helpful during labor.

What about pain relief? When can I get medicine for pain?
Most women do not need medicine for pain until they've been in labor for several hours. Before you can receive medicine for pain, your doctor will evaluate your condition and the condition of the baby. You will have spent some time on the fetal monitor and IV fluids. You may want medicine through your IV to take the edge off or you may want the relief of an epidural anesthetic. If you are uncomfortable, ask your nurse to discuss pain medicine with you and your doctor.

Welcome to the Women's and Children's Pavilion

The Women's & Children's Pavilion at Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital is a new choice for expecting parents in the Mid-South. Our spacious labor and delivery rooms are designed for the family and equipped for the ultimate in privacy, infant safety and comfort. Private NICU (neonatal intensive care) rooms allow families to love and care for newborns together with highly trained intensivists. Other features of the Women's & Children's Pavilion include:

- The patient's support person is welcome to stay with their loved one and sleeper couches or chairs are available in each room. Free WiFi is also available.
- A state-of-the-art infant security system safeguards families and closely monitors each infant.
- The first of its kind in the Mid-South, a 24/7 board certified OB hospitalist is on staff for those rare times when the baby can't wait and your doctor may not have arrived.
- A neonatal specialist is also on staff 24/7.
- An expanded Le Bonheur Unit designed to care for noncritical pediatric patients.
- Located in the Pavilion, the Women's Boutique provides a wide selection of lactation supplies and support.