

BUMP AND BEYOND

Cobb & Douglas Public Health Pregnancy Newsletter



Spacing Between Pregnancies

If you are currently pregnant, having another baby may be the last thing on your mind. However, educating yourself on the importance of spacing between pregnancies and being proactive can help you protect your health and the health of your future babies.

Pregnancy and birth place a lot of stress on your body. Your body needs time to heal and recover before having another baby. If pregnancies occur too closely together, your body may not have the nutrients it needs to support a healthy pregnancy. In order to reduce the risk of having pregnancy complications, it is recommended to wait at least 18 – 24 months after you give birth before you become pregnant again.

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Spacing Between Pregnancies

Some complications that could occur if pregnancies are spaced too close together are:

- Premature birth
- Placental abruption (when the placenta partially or completely peels away from the inner wall of the uterus before delivery)
- Maternal anemia
- Low birth weight
- Congenital disorders

The risk of these complications is higher if the pregnancy occurs within six months of giving birth.

While having pregnancies too close together can cause an increased risk for negative health outcomes, having pregnancies that are spaced too far apart (5-10 years), especially for women over the age of 35 years, can also cause an increased risk of pregnancy complications such as preeclampsia.

It is a personal choice as to when you want to have children and many women already have an idea about how far apart, they want their children to be. Talking to your doctor about your health and understanding the possible risks of pregnancy spacing is the best way to ensure you are making the right choices for the health of you and your children. Your health care should not stop once you deliver your baby. It is important to go to your postpartum appointment and continue with regular check-ups.

If you are unsure if and when you want to have another baby, there are many birth control options available that will help you have control over that decision. Talk to your health care provider about what birth control option is best for you.

At Cobb & Douglas Public Health, we have family planning clinics that can help you with birth control options. Call us at 770-514-2300 to make an appointment.



Caring for Your Newborn

Congratulations! You have a brand new baby to love, and you are looking forward to being able to take your new baby home. This is an exciting time. You have been planning for this moment for months, and now that it is here, you may be feeling a little nervous or anxious about caring for your newborn once you get home. Here are some tips to help you feel confident in providing the care your newborn needs once you are home from the hospital.

DIAPER CHANGES

Your new baby will go through a lot of diapers each day. Maybe as many as ten a day. Make sure you are checking your newborn's diaper often and change it as soon as it becomes wet or soiled. Your baby wearing a wet or soiled diaper for too long can cause diaper rash and skin irritation.

When preparing to change your baby's diaper, make sure you have all the supplies you need right there with you. Do not leave your baby alone on a dressing table or any elevated surface. Stay with your baby at all times while changing their diaper to prevent falls. Always wipe from front to back with a washcloth or wipes and you can use a diaper cream to treat and prevent rashes.

BATHING YOUR NEWBORN

Until your baby's umbilical cord stump falls off, you should only give your newborn a sponge bath because you want to keep the umbilical area dry so it can heal. Since your baby does not do much to get dirty, you really only need to bathe your newborn every few days. It is not necessary to give your little one a daily bath. Too much bathing can actually dry out your baby's skin.

You want to make sure you have all the supplies you need to bathe your baby within your reach before you start your baby's bath. Never leave your baby alone during bath time, not even for a second. A lot of soap is not needed during bathing, but you can use a small amount when washing your baby's hands and private areas or any other areas that are dirty. Use a mild, tear-free soap/shampoo to wash your baby and always wash their face first before washing anything else. Ensure the temperature of the water is not hot. The water should be warm, and you can test the temperature of the water by placing the inside of your wrist under the running water to make sure it is not going to burn your baby.

Caring for Your Newborn

UMBILICAL CORD CARE

As mentioned earlier, you want to keep your baby's umbilical cord area dry so it can heal and fall off. This usually takes around 10 days to 3 weeks to happen. You can clean the cord area with warm water and blot it dry. Don't soak the cord area in water. This is why you will want to give your baby a sponge bath until the cord stump falls off. The stump will change color during healing. It will eventually turn from a yellow color to brown or black. Call your doctor if you notice the area turning red or you notice any discharge.

FEEDING YOUR NEWBORN

Most newborns will eat every 2-3 hours if they are breast fed or formula fed. If you think your baby is hungry, go ahead and feed them. Babies will let you know they are hungry by crying, making sucking noises, or putting their fingers in their mouths. If you are breastfeeding, it can be hard to know if your baby is eating enough. If your baby seems satisfied, is sleeping well, and is having at least 6 wet diapers a day, they are probably doing just fine. If you have any concerns about your newborn not getting enough milk, reach out to your doctor for guidance on your baby's growth and feeding schedule.

SLEEPING

Your newborn will sleep a lot, but not for long periods of time. Most newborns sleep about 2 – 4 hours at a time, so you will be up during the night feeding and changing your baby's diaper. During these first few months, try to sleep and take naps when your baby does in order to get as much rest as you can.

Always place your baby on their back to sleep and do not place pillows, comforters, blankets, bumpers, or stuffed animals in your baby's crib or bassinet. The only thing that should be in your baby's sleep space is a tight, fitted sheet. Having anything else in your baby's crib or bassinet could cause them to suffocate. Your newborn should sleep in the same room as you, but never in the same bed. Letting your baby sleep in the same bed as you could also cause them to suffocate.

BONDING AND SOOTHING

Physical closeness can help you bond with your baby as well as help your baby with their emotional development. Hold your baby often and use skin-to-skin contact. This can be done by finding a seat, opening the top of your shirt, and placing your baby, who is wearing only a diaper, on your bare chest while you hold them. You can cover your baby with a blanket during this time, so they don't become too cold.

If your baby is fussy, and they have been fed and had their diaper changed, your baby may just need to be soothed. You can try talking softly, singing, or humming to your newborn while you sway or rock them.

You can also swaddle your baby. This is done by wrapping your baby snugly in a blanket. Swaddling your newborn can help them feel secure, comforted, warm, and also help reduce their startle reflex which can wake your baby. When done properly, swaddling keeps your baby's arms close to their sides, but allows for some leg movement. You can ask the nurse who is caring for your baby after you deliver to show you the proper way to do this.

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Caring for Your Newborn

Even though all of this may be new to you, and you may feel overwhelmed with the responsibility of caring for your newborn, you can do it and before you know it, you will have a routine and caring for your baby will become more natural and comfortable for you. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. If you have any questions or concerns about caring for your newborn, call your doctor, Healthy Start Nurse, or Case Manager and they can provide guidance and resources.



Rewards & Incentives

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

With Healthy Start, all participants are **Winners!** However, we want to extend a special congratulations to our recent raffle winner for their participation in completing a Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Congratulations to the winner of our August gift card raffle drawing. They will receive a \$25 gift card of appreciation!!



As each of you communicate monthly with your Care Team, you should be given the opportunity to complete a survey; not only as a chance to be entered into our monthly drawing, but also, and most importantly, for you to be able to provide feedback on your experience with our programming/services and to let us know how we can improve. All that is required to be entered into the raffle is that you send confirmation of your completed survey to your Healthy Start Nurse or Care Coordinator within the month that you receive it, and your name can be entered. Please note that you do not have to participate in the raffle drawing and may complete surveys anonymously, if you prefer.

Gift Card Drawing Opportunities

In addition to items you may already receive, we will soon have more gift card drawings!

On your monthly calls and/or visits with your Healthy Start Nurse or Care Coordinator, you may become eligible for drawings for additional gifts based on many of the healthy habits that you are already doing. Some of the ways you may have a chance to win are listed below:

- Prenatal Care
- Postpartum Care
- Well-Women Care
- Georgia Hope Support Group Participation
- Peer Referrals
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Events/Classes (gift cards may be limited)
- CAN Events Participation

Moms' Group Sessions

We hope many of you are finding the Moms' Group Sessions through Georgia Hope to be enlightening. This service is provided for you twice a week as a means of support and camaraderie with other ladies that may be in similar stages of life as you. We want to see each of you happy, healthy, and thriving in every aspect of your life, and our hope is that this is one way to help with that.

Going forward, as a consistent participant of the Moms' Group Sessions (attending at least one weekly session 3-4 times a month) you may be eligible to earn gift cards for restaurants, including Panera Bread and Chick-Fil-A, while supplies last! This is just one of the small ways for us to thank you for allowing us to be a part of your journey!

Events & Classes

• **Stork's Nest**

Our local Stork's Nest is offering **free**, app-based learning modules for prenatal education classes. Earn a \$10 gift card per module! Register at <https://tinyurl.com/36k55u56> using Rho Xi Zeta for question 4.

• **Pickles & Ice Cream**

Pickles & Ice Cream is offering free, live webinars covering prenatal, postpartum, breastfeeding, and newborn care. To view class dates and times, visit: <https://picklesandicecreamga.org/events>.

• **Healthy Start Moms' Support Group**

CDPH's Healthy Start Program launched a virtual support group for moms, led by a therapist. Whether you're expecting or recently had your baby, you are welcome to attend.

To join the Tuesday Zoom Meetings from 5:00 – 6:30pm

[https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/84700178631?](https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/84700178631?pwd=cDl6aU1tVHh2UStISm93Y0dYcTB2dz09)

[pwd=cDl6aU1tVHh2UStISm93Y0dYcTB2dz09](https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/84700178631?pwd=cDl6aU1tVHh2UStISm93Y0dYcTB2dz09)

To join the Thursday Zoom Meetings from 2:00 – 3:30pm

[https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/82763074795?](https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/82763074795?pwd=a0w2MGVoaG1oanp5aWR1OHpOcTlrZz09)

[pwd=a0w2MGVoaG1oanp5aWR1OHpOcTlrZz09](https://cdphonline-org.zoom.us/j/82763074795?pwd=a0w2MGVoaG1oanp5aWR1OHpOcTlrZz09)

• **Inspiring Fathers Program**

Inspiring Fathers is a program for individuals who support a mom in Healthy Start. We want to prepare fathers, partners, or other support figures for the mental, spiritual, and emotional responsibility of being actively involved in the child's life. The program includes a 12-week course that will teach the tools to care for the financial and emotional stability of your family. Topics will cover issues such as job training, housing assistance, self-esteem, relationship building and parenting skills. Meetings are held on Wednesdays from 6pm - 8pm over a hot meal, as we help you build a safe, strong home life for your child. Contact 770-635-0523 to register or to get answers to any questions you have about the program.



**Healthy
Start**



**Inspiring
Fathers**

**COBB & DOUGLAS HEALTHY START HAS
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