

# CONGRATULATIONS!!!

## An Introduction from HM Medical Team

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Welcome to our practice! Thank you for choosing us to care for you during this very important and precious time in your life! Please take the time to read this introduction. We are a team and look forward to developing a rewarding relationship with you! We have 2 doctors and several wonderful Physician Assistants. You will be cared for by all of us throughout your pregnancy.

### **Milestones**

Your pregnancy is divided into three trimesters. The first trimester begins at conception and continues until the 14<sup>th</sup> week. The second trimester is between the 14<sup>th</sup> week and until the 28<sup>th</sup> week. During the first and second trimester you are seen once a month. These first two trimesters are critical for the genetic screening and general maternal screening. In addition, we will routinely check your weight, blood pressure, the baby's heartbeat and your urine for protein and glucose. After 22 weeks we will begin to measure your uterus externally (this is called "fundal height") to ensure the baby is growing appropriately. The third trimester is between the 29<sup>th</sup> week and until delivery. This time is also important as you begin to come every two weeks until 35<sup>th</sup> week, after 35<sup>th</sup> week you will come at least once a week. During this period, we are closely monitoring number of things including preeclampsia and labor symptoms. Your due date is when you reach 40 weeks; however, full term is considered 37 weeks or more.

### **First Trimester**

Your initial visit normally is somewhere between 5 weeks and 10 weeks and usually performed by our Physician assistants. This visit will entail a general history intake to identify any pre-existing medical conditions that may complicate the pregnancy, establish your due date, and order lab testing. The initial OB panel includes blood type, blood counts, blood sugar testing, MMR and varicella immunity, hepatitis C, hepatitis B, HIV, syphilis, and urine culture testing. If not up to date; we will typically perform a full physical exam that includes a pap smear and Gonorrhea/Chlamydia testing. We may order recessive gene carrier testing such as Cystic Fibrosis, Spinal Muscular Dystrophy, etc.

### **10 Weeks – 13 Weeks and 6 days**

During this appointment we will review your results to date, and order recommended screening tests for chromosomal health of the baby. We offer high sensitivity screening called Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (NIPT) that can obtain fetal DNA from maternal blood sample. This test is a screening test for Down Syndrome, Trisomy 18, and Trisomy 13. In addition, it can provide the gender of the fetus.

It can be performed any time after 10 weeks.

Chorionic villi placental sampling is an invasive test in which a sample of the tissue is taken from the placenta. This is an optional test and can be done by a trained High risk Maternal Fetal Medicine specialty physician between 11 and 14 weeks of pregnancy as a diagnostic test and evaluates all chromosomes.

You will also be scheduled for an ultrasound called NT “Nuchal Translucency” between 11 – 13 weeks. This is a specialized ultrasound measurement of the thickness of the nuchal fold done to screen for chromosomal abnormalities in a fetus, although altered extracellular matrix composition and limited lymphatic drainage can also be detected.

### **15 to 20 Weeks**

Second trimester blood test is done between 15 to 21 weeks. The purpose is to screen for abnormalities in the MSAFP hormone which can be linked with increased risks of spina bifida or placental health complications through the pregnancy course.

Amniocentesis testing is an optional invasive test performed by High Risk MFM specialists in which amniotic fluid sample is obtained through an abdominal wall any time after 15 weeks as a diagnostic test which evaluates all chromosomes.

### **18 to 22 Weeks**

At this time, it is advised to have an ultrasound to evaluate full anatomy and development of the baby. This helps to detect any major defects prior to delivery that screening alone may miss. This ultrasound will also monitor fetal growth and evaluate the location of your placenta.

### **24 to 28 Weeks**

During this period, It’s important to screen for gestational diabetes. Placenta hormones can create insulin resistance. This will include a 2-hour fasting blood sugar test done at your local laboratory. We recommend no food / no calories for minimum 8 hours, you can drink water prior to the test start.

At 28 weeks, for those patients who have an Rh negative blood type we will order a Rhogam injection to prevent Rh sensitization. **\*\*\*\*\*Please do not miss these tests\*\*\*\*\***

### **After 28 weeks of pregnancy you are typically seen every 2 weeks**

### **30 – 34 weeks**

We will perform an ultrasound for position, fetal growth, placental location, and amniotic fluid level at this time. We recommend the Tdap vaccine during this time period in order to offer fetal maternal antibody protections against the Whooping Cough or Pertussis as recommended by pediatricians. All vaccines now are done through retail pharmacies and are covered by your insurance plan.

The Influenza vaccine is recommended as well in pregnancy during the flu season.

**35 to 36 Weeks**

At this visit we will perform a vulvar and perianal skin culture for the group B streptococcus bacteria. We know that 25 percent of people are carriers for these bacteria. It is not normally harmful to you or your partner, however; if you are a carrier you will need antibiotics while in labor for vaginal deliveries with penicillin or other effective antibiotics if you are allergic to penicillin.

**36 Weeks up to delivery**

Your visits are now at least once a week. Some patients will have twice a week visits which are done for NST – non stress testing in scenarios where additional monitoring for placental health is advised.

**Cord Blood Banking**

All parents should consider storing cord blood after the infant is delivered in the event there is a need for stem cells later in life. There are many new uses for stem cells in modern medicine and the field/opportunities are growing.

There are many companies to choose from. They each have potential benefits. There are private and public banks. Please research this if you are interested.

Stemcyte	1-866-389-4659	<a href="http://www.stemcyte.com">www.stemcyte.com</a>
Viacord	1-877-247-0753	<a href="http://www.viacord.com">www.viacord.com</a>
Cord Blood Registry	1-888-CORDBLOOD	<a href="http://www.cordblood.com">www.cordblood.com</a>

**Our Practice**

We are pleased to offer you compassionate and comprehensive obstetrical care. Our training and experience allows us to welcome patients with high-risk pregnancies. During your pregnancy you will be seen by our entire group. Through our affiliation with Hoag Hospital, we are able to provide additional prenatal services including: perinatal and genetic referrals, medical consultations, Hoag based exercise and nutrition counseling, prepared childbirth classes and lactation classes.

Dr. Howe and Dr. Maslovaric share hospital coverage with Dr. Illeck, Dr. Narayan, and Dr. Denicola. This coverage is available both for emergencies and deliveries after hours. Simply calling the office number you will be directed to the exchange which will connect you to one of us. On occasion we may have an equally qualified colleague cover when needed.

Please do not go to Hoag in Irvine. **We do not** cover patients at that hospital location. Thank you.

**The Hospital**

Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian offers a highly sophisticated Prenatal Unit including elegant labor, delivery, and recovery rooms (LDR’s), experienced physician, nursing, and support staff. Maternity services include lactation consultations, assistance in newborn care, and attention to your healthcare needs. Our office will provide information regarding pre-registrations, which typically occurs around 20 weeks as well as access to these services. Please reference Hoag hospital website at [www.Hoag.org](http://www.Hoag.org) for

more details. Consider downloading the Circle by Hoag application to your phone. Hospital registration, classes and information in pregnancy is easily obtained through the application. We strongly encourage you to take all the classes you desire from the Hoag Hospital OB Education Department including birthing classes, breast feeding, newborn care and newborn resuscitation.

### **Travel**

For long trips we recommend wearing compression socks, take one baby aspirin per day on days of travel, and make sure you stay well hydrated. Pregnancy increases the risk of blood clots with prolonged immobilization and travel. Since unexpected complications can arise at any time in pregnancy, we recommend that you limit travel after 30 weeks of pregnancy. After 36 weeks we ask that you stay within approximately one hour of Hoag Hospital. Please review with us your travel plans at your visits.

### **Labor**

We typically will review labor symptoms and hospital check-in process during your visits. You can also call Hoag Hospital Labor and Delivery at (949) 764-5789 or go directly to the hospital if you feel it is indicated. You are welcome to call the practice for any questions anytime.

### **Delivery**

Our purpose is to make this a memorable and rewarding experience. Husbands and partners are encouraged to participate. Epidurals are available upon request. IV's are a necessary part of your care, for hydration and in case of an emergency. Internal monitors and Pitocin are reserved for specific indications as needed to prevent complications. Episiotomies and enemas are not routinely performed. If a cesarean section delivery is required, the indications, risks and benefits will be fully discussed with you unless a true life-threatening emergency precludes this.

### **Medications and Toxins**

Toxoplasmosis: we recommend that women do not change the cat box from the time they start trying to become pregnant until the pregnancy is complete. You may handle your cat but we recommend that you do not kiss it as a Toxoplasmosis enters the body through the mouth and skin. Raw and rare beef can also contain Toxoplasmosis. Therefore, we recommend that you only eat beef that has been cooked until it is medium.

Most medications and toxins cross the placenta and are transferred to the fetus in variable amounts. Exercise caution before taking any medications. This is most critical during the organ formation that occurs within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

Limit caffeine intake to 200 to 300 mg of caffeine per day. This is typically about 2 cups of regular coffee.

Avoid artificial sweeteners.

Do not ingest shark, swordfish, tile fish or albacore tuna steak during pregnancy due to the higher levels of mercury which has been found to be neurologically toxic. Refer to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.otispregnancy.org](http://www.otispregnancy.org).

Please educate yourself about Listeria which is found in the dirt, non-pasteurized cheeses and juices and occasionally in processed meats, such as hot dogs and sandwich meats. Clean your fruits and vegetables well. Order soups and cooked vegetables when eating out if possible.

Prenatal vitamins with 1 mg of folic acid and DHA or Omega 3 fatty acids are recommended. Iron supplementation is often recommended and is also important later with breast feeding. Add Citrucel or Metamucil to help with the constipation frequently experienced with iron supplementation. Avoid calcium and dairy products within two hours of taking iron to maximize its absorption. Add a stool softer, such as Colace if additional help is needed. This is often found in prenatal vitamins too.

### **Environmental/Work Hazards**

Avoid contact with oil-based paint, petroleum distillates such as paint thinner and toxic chemicals.

Exercise is important in pregnancy. Labor is improved when you are physically fit. It is recommended that pregnant patients get moderate cardiovascular exercise/activity for at least 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Please let the instructors know you are pregnant in classes and consider slowing down the pace if you are out of breath, such that you can not speak. Please incorporate weekly core training such as Yoga and Pilates.

### **Physical and Emotional Abuse**

Domestic violence against family members is a generational problem. If you have been subjected to violence in any form, please discuss it with your physician. If you have not yet had counseling regarding this problem, we can assist. Without proper treatment, domestic violence can continue from generation to generation.

### **RESOURCES**

National 24/7 DV Hotline: 1 800 799 7233

Human Options: 887 854 3594

Interval House: 714 891 8121

Laura's House: 866 498 1511

WTLC: 877 531 5522 email/text [LOVE@wtlc.org](mailto:LOVE@wtlc.org)

WTLC – Center, Fullerton: 714 992 1931 and 211OC: 211oc.org/DV

OC Adult Protective Services: 800 451 5155 and OC Family Justice Center 714 765 1645

Child Abuse Registry: 714 940 1000 and to report abuse 24 h a day 800 207 4464

CSP Domestic Violence Assistance Program: 714 935 7956

**Postpartum**

We look forward to continuing your care after delivery. Normal daily activities are recommended but avoid strenuous exercise, especially if you’ve had a cesarean section delivery or sexual relations until full recovery is confirmed at your six-week visit. We will discuss contraception options at that time.

**Finances**

Most insurance companies pay a “Global Maternity Package” which includes around 12 routine pregnancy office visits, delivery, rounding in the hospital and a postpartum visit. This package does not include some ultrasounds, visits for medical conditions not otherwise related to routine pregnancy, complications, hospital admissions prior to delivery, and fetal non stress testing. These are processed by insurance as separate claims. Our billing policies are within AMA-CPT guidelines. Lab testing will be processed by the lab performing the service. Please contact Nautilus our billing company, for any billing questions or explanations regarding payments. If your insurance requires pre-certification or authorization for delivery or other services, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE for NOTIFYING them PRIOR to services being rendered. If you have any questions about what is covered or what is not included, we can help you, however we ALWAYS recommend calling your insurance DIRECTLY to clarify with them as they have the ultimate say in your insurance plan benefits.

We provide reasonable cash pricing for patients who have insurance we are not in network with or whom do not have medical insurance.

If you have questions prior to your next scheduled visit, please do not hesitate to email through our Med fusion email system or call during normal office hours Mon-Fri between 8:30 am and 12:00 pm and 1:30 pm until 5 pm. PLEASE RESERVE AFTER HOURS CALLS FOR TRUE EMERGENCIES ONLY. Thank you.

I acknowledge that I have received the preceding information and my questions have been answered.

Name (PRINT)	Signature	Date

Thank you for choosing us for your prenatal care. On behalf of the entire staff, we look forward to taking care of you and your baby (or babies) during this pregnancy.

Sincerely,

Candace Howe, MD & Marina Maslovaric, MD  
OB/GYN, FACOG