



Welcome

Bright Start[®] is a special program for our pregnant members. We want to make sure you have all you need for a healthy pregnancy and baby.



We are here
to answer
your pregnancy
questions.

We can also
help you find
resources and
services you
may need.

Important numbers

Bright Start program

1-877-364-6797 or TTY 711

Member Services

**1-888-991-7200 or
TTY 1-888-987-5704**

24-hour Nurse Call Line

1-866-566-1513 or TTY 711

My obstetrician (OB) doctor or nurse midwife

Write the phone number here.

WIC

**1-800-WIC-WINS
(1-800-942-9467)**

Poison Control

1-800-222-1222

Medical Assistance

Transportation Program (MATP)

Bright Start can help you
get connected to MATP for
transportation to appointments.



As an AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania member, you can choose either an obstetrician (OB) doctor or a nurse midwife for your prenatal care. In this brochure, we will refer to that person as your “OB doctor.” You do not need a referral to see your OB doctor.

Prenatal care is the care you get while you are pregnant.

To have a healthy pregnancy you should:

- Follow your OB doctor's advice.
- Keep all of your prenatal appointments.
- Take a multivitamin with folic acid.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water, juice, or milk a day.
- Eat 3 meals a day and healthy snacks to help your baby grow properly.
- If you smoke — **stop!** Smoking increases your risk of having problems with your pregnancy. This includes delivering too early or having a baby that is too small. Need help to stop smoking? Call the PA Free Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** or go to <http://pa.quitlogix.org>, Pennsylvania's online resource guide.
- Don't drink alcohol or take illegal drugs.
- As long as it is OK with your OB doctor, get some exercise. Walking is a great option.
- Get plenty of rest.

When should I see my OB doctor?

- Once every 4 weeks until 32 weeks.
- Every 2 to 3 weeks until 36 weeks.
- Weekly from 37 weeks until delivery.
- You may need to see your OB doctor more often if you are having problems.

Call Bright Start if you have any questions.

Preterm labor

(labor that starts too early)

Preterm labor means you have signs of labor before the 37th week of pregnancy. Preterm labor can cause your baby to be born too soon. This can lead to health problems with your baby. It is very important to call your OB doctor or go to the hospital if you think you are having preterm labor. Signs of preterm labor are:

- Regular contractions, with or without pain, more than 5 to 6 times an hour (some women say this feels like the belly tightening or balling up of the baby).
- Strong contractions.
- Constant cramping like you would have with a heavy period.
- Low, dull back pain that does not go away.
- Bloody show (bleeding or spotting).
- Diarrhea.

If you are having preterm labor, it is very important you follow your OB doctor's instructions. You may be put on bed rest and given medicine to stop contractions. Sometimes women are given steroid shots to help the baby's lungs.

17P injections

If you have had a baby before 37 weeks, you may need weekly shots of 17P. 17P is a progesterone (hormone) medicine for pregnant women who have already had a preterm (early) birth. Extra progesterone for some women can help stop a preterm birth. Women should begin getting the shots between 16 and 20 weeks and continue until the 36th week.

To learn more about 17P shots and to see if you would need this shot, please call Bright Start.

Gestational diabetes

(high blood sugar during pregnancy)

- This is a type of diabetes that only happens during pregnancy.
- It often starts between the 24th and 28th week of pregnancy and goes away after delivery.
- Gestational diabetes is serious and can be dangerous for you and your baby.
- With gestational diabetes, your body has a problem making insulin.
- It is important to be checked for diabetes during your pregnancy and to follow your OB doctor's orders.

Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes

- Diabetes is an illness where your blood sugar is too high.
- Diabetes can cause lifelong health problems if it is not treated by a health care provider, like your OB doctor.
- High blood sugar in the beginning of your pregnancy can raise the risk of problems for you and your baby.

Keeping your blood sugar in control, with your OB doctor's help, will lower your risk of problems.

If you have diabetes questions, please call Bright Start.

Dental care

A woman who is pregnant should see her dentist at least once during the pregnancy. A woman's gum health affects the health of her unborn baby. Women with gum disease can get an infection that can cause the baby to be born too early. A baby that is born too early is more likely to have health problems and disabilities that can last a lifetime.

Hyperemesis

(severe nausea and vomiting)

If you have nausea and are throwing up so severely you are losing a lot of weight, you may have hyperemesis.

Signs may be:

- You are losing weight from the vomiting.
- You cannot keep food or liquids down for more than 24 hours.
- Your urine becomes very dark yellow or you do not have to urinate very often.
- You have stomach pain, a fever, or feel faint or weak.

If you think you have any of these issues, tell your OB doctor. You may need medical treatment.

To learn more, call Bright Start.

Pre-eclampsia

(high blood pressure during pregnancy)

Signs are:

- Severe or constant headache that does not go away with rest and/or medicine.
- Changes in vision, such as sensitivity to light, blurred vision, double vision, or flashing lights.
- Nausea, throwing up, and/or pain in the upper stomach.
- Sudden weight gain and more swelling, especially in hands, on face, and around eyes.

Kick counts

Most people start to feel their baby move at about 18 weeks (4 to 5 months). The movements will become stronger and easier for you to notice as you get further in your pregnancy. When you are at 28 weeks (7 months), start counting your baby's movements daily. It is best to count your baby's movements about 1 hour after a meal or at the time of day your baby moves the most.

- Count the baby's movements once a day.
- Movements may be a kick, swish, or roll.
- Start to count any time the baby is active.
- Count your baby's movements while lying down on your left side.
- You should feel at least 10 movements in 2 hours.

Call your OB doctor if you find any of the following:

- You do not feel 10 movements within 2 hours.
- It takes longer and longer for your baby to move 10 times.
- You have not felt the baby move all day.



The last weeks of pregnancy count

It is best for you to wait to have your baby until you are at least 39 to 40 weeks. If your OB doctor lets you choose when to have your baby, wait until at least 39 weeks.

Babies need time

Babies born too early may have more health problems at birth and later in life than babies born at full term. Being pregnant for at least 39 weeks gives your baby's body the time it needs to grow.

- Organs like the brain, lungs, and liver get the time they need to develop.
- The baby is less likely to have vision and hearing problems after birth.
- The baby has time to gain more weight, which helps him or her stay warm after birth.
- The baby can suck and swallow and stay awake long enough to eat after birth.
- Babies born early are more likely to have breathing problems, like apnea. Apnea is when a baby stops breathing.
- Babies born early are more likely to die of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is when a baby dies suddenly, often during sleep.

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After your baby is born!

Important things to do before you leave the hospital

- Make an appointment with your OB doctor for your postpartum visit.
- Make an appointment with your baby's doctor (pediatrician).
- Call Member Services at **1-888-991-7200** or **TTY 1-888-987-5704**. Let them know the baby's name and the name of your baby's doctor. Member Services can also help you choose a doctor for your baby.
- Call your local County Assistance Office. Tell them you have a new baby in your household.
- Call the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program at **1-800-WIC-WINS**. The WIC program can help you get the right foods for you and your baby.

Complete the list of calls to make above!

Postpartum

The time after you have your baby is called postpartum.

- **Take it easy** the first few days after your baby's birth. If you have family and friends who can help you, let them.
- **Postpartum home visit** by a nurse is a covered benefit for all women who have a baby. Please talk with your OB doctor about this home visit. This will help make sure you and your baby are healthy after childbirth. If the nurse does not call you, please call Bright Start at **1-877-364-6797 (TTY 711)**.
- **Postpartum depression or baby blues** (a little sadness) occurs in half of all new moms for a few days after giving birth. **Baby blues** are caused by a rapid drop in hormone levels. You may find yourself crying for no reason; feeling anxious, irritable, and moody; or not having any energy. These symptoms often go away within 2 weeks.
- **Postpartum depression lasts longer and is more serious.** It may require treatment with therapy and/or medicine. You may have postpartum depression if you:
 - Can't sleep for several days.
 - Want to sleep all the time.
 - Fear you might harm yourself and/or your baby.
 - Feel like you can't care for your baby.
 - Feel guilty.
 - Have less energy.
 - Find it hard to concentrate.

If you have any of these symptoms, tell your doctor right away. If your doctor is not available, you can call our Nurse Call Line 24 hours a day/7 days a week at **1-866-566-1513 (TTY 711)**.

Think about family planning

Did you know that it is important to wait a period of time between pregnancies for the health of you and your baby?

Family planning lets you plan any future pregnancies. You have many options when choosing birth control. Work with your doctor to pick one that is right for you. Here are some options:

- **Hormonal birth control** prevents ovulation (releasing an egg from the ovary).
 - The pill form is taken by mouth every day.
 - Other forms include skin patches, vaginal rings, implants, and shots.
- **Long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC)**
LARCs are a category of birth control that include:
 - **Intrauterine device (IUD)** — a small device placed in the uterus by a doctor. The IUD releases hormones or copper into the uterus to prevent pregnancy.
 - **Birth control implant** — a small plastic rod placed under the skin of the upper arm. The implant releases hormones to prevent ovulation.

LARCs are inserted into the body and then work for several years. LARCs are reversible if you want to stop using them.

- **Diaphragms and cervical caps** are flexible rubber cups that fit inside the vagina to keep sperm out. They are used with a spermicide.
- **Spermicides** are foams, jellies, tablets, creams, suppositories, or dissolvable films put in the vagina before sex to kill sperm. They can be used alone or with a condom, diaphragm, or cervical cap.
- **Condoms** not only prevent pregnancy but can also help prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The male condom is a thin covering that fits over the penis to prevent sperm from entering the vagina. A female condom goes inside the vagina to keep the sperm out.
- **Emergency contraceptive** is a way to prevent pregnancy if your birth control method fails or after unprotected sex.
 - There is a pill, sometimes called the morning after pill, that can be purchased at your pharmacy or family planning clinic. Depending on your age and the brand you select, you might need a prescription from your doctor. This pill can be used up to 5 days after sex.
 - The copper IUD is another type of emergency contraceptive. A doctor has to insert the copper IUD. It can be placed 5 to 7 days after sex.

Your postpartum visit is a great time to talk about family planning. Your doctor can help you make a plan that's best for you.

Members can go to any doctor or clinic for family planning services. This includes doctors and clinics not part of the AmeriHealth Caritas network. You do not need to see your primary care practitioner (PCP) first.





BRIGHTSTART®

This managed care plan may not cover all your health care expenses. Read your contract carefully to determine which health care services are covered.

This is to help you learn about your medical condition. It is not to take the place of your doctor. If you have questions, talk with your doctor. If you think you need to see your doctor because of something you have read in this information, please call your doctor. Never stop or wait to get medical attention because of something you have read in this material.

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ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-888-991-7200 (TTY 1-888-987-5704).

Atención: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-888-991-7200 (TTY 1-888-987-5704).

Внимание: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-888-991-7200 (телетайп 1-888-987-5704).

For the full nondiscrimination notice, go to www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com.

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