



# Healthy Beginnings

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Promoting Healthy Births and Healthy Families

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## Think Twice Before Scheduling a Labor Induction!

Labor induction is when your health care provider gives you medicine or breaks your water to begin labor. This could be because your doctor has some health concerns about you or your baby, and an earlier birth may be safer. However, sometimes a woman “chooses” to deliver their baby early for reasons that are not medical, such as:

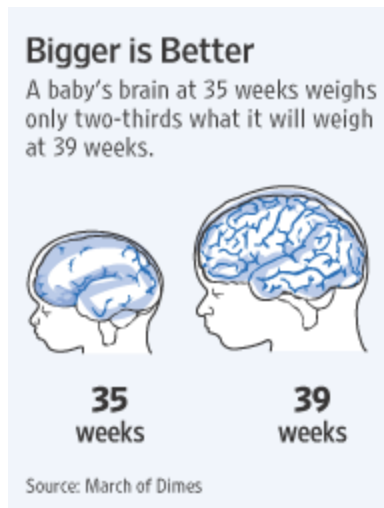
- Wanting a delivery date that would make it easy for family and friends to visit after the birth
- Wanting a delivery date that you know your preferred doctor is available
- Wanting to be in control of an event that typically comes as a surprise

Some people might not give a second thought to delivering their baby early. The truth is, those last few weeks in the womb are very important to a baby’s growth and development. The last month of pregnancy might not be the most comfortable time in a woman’s life, and everyone might be very excited to meet the new baby—face to face. But waiting the full, 40 weeks can have many health benefits for your baby.

During the last 6-8 weeks of pregnancy, baby is busy growing, maturing and getting ready to greet you and the rest of the world! Whenever possible, it’s best to wait for labor to begin naturally, here’s why:

- A “due date” is just an estimate. It could be off by as much as 2 weeks. This means if you schedule an early delivery at 37 weeks, you might only be 35 weeks along—this is too soon for baby to leave the womb.
- Baby’s lungs, eyes, ears, heart and brain are still developing during the last weeks of pregnancy. The longer baby is in the womb, the healthier and stronger he or she will be.

- Baby is learning while in the womb. He or she will be figuring out how to suck and swallow which are important skills for eating.
- Early delivery can sometimes lead to a C-section and/or a NICU admission. This would increase the length of stay at the hospital and the cost of care.
- Baby’s brain has a lot of growing to do during the last few weeks of pregnancy. The photo below shows the difference in brain size between 35 and 39 weeks.



Reduce the health risks of baby being born too soon (before they are fully developed) by avoiding an early delivery unless your doctor has a medical reason. The last few weeks make a big difference in how strong and healthy your baby will be when that special day arrives! Contact your doctor for more information on the Health benefits of waiting for labor to start naturally.

Source: March of Dimes

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**The mission of the Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network is to improve birth outcomes and maternal, child and family health**

## Reducing Lead Exposure

Lead is a natural substance that can be found in small amounts in the earth. It used to be a common ingredient in paint until a law was created in 1978 that made lead-based paint illegal in the US. This type of paint became illegal because we learned it could cause health problems when people are exposed to it. Lead is especially harmful to children because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults do. Their brains are also more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead, such as behavior and learning problems.

### *How are people exposed to lead?*

- Children may eat paint chips or breathe in paint dust from houses built before 1978.
- Children may chew, bite, or suck on painted toys, toy jewelry, or painted furniture. If the toy or piece of furniture is an antique or a “collectible”, it is more likely to contain lead.
- Soil in some areas may have a high level of lead.
- Some make-up such as lipstick may contain lead.
- If the plumbing pipes in your house are old and contain lead, it could get into your drinking water.
- Lead could get into your food or drinks if you cook or serve it in lead-glazed ceramics or lead-crystal.

Since children spend time crawling on the floor, playing in the dirt, and putting their hands and other objects in their mouth, they have a higher risk of exposure.

### *How can I reduce my family's exposure to lead?*

- Check all painted surfaces regularly to make sure it is not peeling or crumbling.
- Clean up water damage quickly and completely.
- Keep your home clean and dust-free.
- Clean around painted areas where friction can create dust—such as doors, windows, and drawers. Wipe these areas with a wet sponge or rag to remove paint chips or dust.
- Use only cold water to prepare food and drinks, and let it run for at least 60 seconds before using (this is called “flushing the pipes”).
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often
- Teach children to wipe and remove their shoes and wash hands after playing outdoors.
- Encourage your children to eat healthy food (children with healthy diets absorb less lead).
- When construction work is being done on the home, make sure your contractor is “Lead-Safe Certified”.

## Local Resources

**The Oneida County Health Department** is a great, local resource if you would like help with lead prevention.

Their services include:

- Talking to family members about where lead hazards might be in the home, how to stop children from being exposed, how to clean the areas where lead is found, how to get a child tested for lead, and how to get help from other programs.
- Free testing of paint, dust, water and soil around the home for eligible residents (dependent on where the child lives and/or what the child's blood lead level is).
- Lead testing for children who do not have a primary care doctor or insurance.

### *How do I know if my family has been exposed to lead?*

A blood test is the only way to know if you or your loved ones have been exposed to lead. If you have concerns, talk to your primary care provider, or contact the Oneida County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (315) 798-5996, or the Herkimer County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at (315) 867-1176.



Source: World Health Organization, Environmental Protection Agency

***What is Domestic Violence?***

Domestic violence can come in many forms. In general, it is when one intimate partner purposely tries to have power and control over the other partner by using any or all of the following:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological abuse
- emotional abuse

***Who is affected by domestic violence and why does it occur?***

Domestic violence can happen to anyone. It affects people of every race, religion, economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender and nationality. Domestic Violence is caused by one person’s *choice* to control another person in a relationship. It is not caused by drugs or alcohol or by anything the victim did to ‘provoke’ the abuser. Abuse is always a choice and it’s never the victim’s fault. Sometimes, domestic violence starts or increases when the victim becomes pregnant. This could be because the abuser feels stressed about the new responsibilities of being a parent. The person might also feel jealous that the victim’s attention will now be more focused on the baby.

***What are the warning signs of domestic violence?***

Abuse isn’t always easy to spot like a bruise or other physical injury. Some of the common signs include:

- Telling the victim that they can never do anything right
- Showing jealousy of the victim’s family and friends and time spent away
- Accusing the victim of cheating
- Embarrassing or shaming the victim with put-downs
- Dictating how the victim dresses, wears their hair, etc.
- Monitors the victim’s every move (“take a picture right now so that I know you’re really at your parents’ house”, for example)

***Where Can I Go for Help?***

If you think you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, tell someone you trust (a friend, family member, clergy member, health care provider or counselor) and contact one of the following confidential, 24-hour, domestic and sexual violence services hotlines:

- ⇒ Oneida County: (315) 797-7740
- ⇒ Herkimer County: (315) 866-0458

**Remember – No one deserves to be physically or emotionally abused. Recognize the signs of abuse and seek help.**

Source: NCADV, NYS Office for the Prevention of DV, March of Dimes

Experiencing morning sickness? Give these popsicles a try! Featured in Parents Magazine, they contain ginger which is a natural ingredient that helps ease nausea. Plus, they only take 10 minutes to put together!

**Ingredients:**

- 1 and 2/3 cups orange juice (not from concentrate)
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger

**How to make them:**

1. Stir the orange juice, lemon juice, and ginger together in a measuring cup.
2. Pour the juice into popsicle molds or ice cube molds (stir between each pour to make sure the ginger gets into each popsicle).
3. Freeze overnight.



Recipe from FULL BELLY 2014 Tara Mataraza Desmond, Running Press, a member of the Perseus Books Group

Source: Parents Magazine



**We'd like to hear from you!**  
 Send information about upcoming events or ideas for future articles to: MVPN Newsletter, 3 Parkside Court, Building 2, Utica, NY 13501; Fax: 732-5640; Email: mcapuana@newfamily.org

### Community Health Worker Services

Community Health Workers help women of child bearing age improve their health, as well as the health of their family.

They are an outreach and home visiting program serving Oneida & Herkimer county residents. If you need help getting health insurance, nutrition information, food stamps, finding a doctor, and more... Call them today!

**(315) 801-5011**

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### Are you in need of infant clothing?

Check out St. Clare's Cupboard and Cleophas Closet at the Thea Bowman House—This special program, operating out of their Lafayette Street site, provides an emergency food pantry for West Utica residents and second hand clothing, free of charge, to anyone in need.

**Hours:** 1:00-2:00 pm Monday through Friday

**Address:** 731 Lafayette Street, Utica

**Phone:** (315) 797-0748

## New York State WIC Program

*Healthy Food, Healthy Families, Healthy Future*

- \*Healthful Foods at No Cost
- \* Health & Nutrition Information
- \* Breastfeeding Information & Support
- \* Health & Immunization Screenings
- \* Recipes, Educational Materials
- \* Nutrition Counseling
- \* Referrals to Community Services

**To see if you're eligible, call 1-800-522-5006 to find the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) office nearest you!**



### The Baby Weigh Station at the Oneida County Health Department

⇒ Get answers to your questions from a Certified Lactation Counselor

⇒ Check your baby's weight

**Staff members will work with you to solve problems and build confidence so you can breastfeed as long as you would like!**

Call for an appointment.

Oneida County Health Department

406 Elizabeth Street, Utica New York

**798-5906 or 798-5747**



### Pregnant?

**Protect yourself and your baby.**

**Get early prenatal care!**

### Prenatal Care - Medicaid Prenatal Services Program

Early and regular check-ups are important to you and your baby's health.

Medicaid Prenatal Services Program offers complete pregnancy care and other health care services to women and teens who live in New York State.

And there's no cost to eligible women who participate in Medicaid Prenatal Services!

Call MVPN at 732-4657 or toll free at 1-877-267-6193 for more information.