

## Nesting

As you approach your due date, you may suddenly feel the urge to complete projects, organize, clean or do other things to prepare for the birth of your baby. This is called “nesting,” and many women report feeling better than they have through the whole pregnancy. Do whatever you feel you need to do to satisfy this urge but be sure not to overdo it. It is important to conserve your energy for labor, delivery and caring for your new baby. Try to avoid lack of sleep and fatigue.

## Hospital admission

When you arrive at the hospital to have your baby, someone will verify your name and date of birth before taking you to your room. A hospital identification band will be placed on your wrist and a nurse will review your health history, any medications you may be taking and what you are currently experiencing. The hospital you have chosen will likely already have the information from your prenatal visits with your physician and will obtain the most updated records when you arrive.

Simple laboratory tests are often ordered when you are admitted to the hospital, and these will be collected. You will be given a hospital gown to change into and an IV line will be inserted. You will be examined to determine the stage of labor you are in, to allow your progress to be monitored and to determine the position of the baby. Your contractions and your baby’s heartbeat will be monitored to assure your baby’s well-being. This monitoring may be intermittent or continuous depending on the condition of the baby, the stage of labor and a number of other factors.

38  
WEEKS

### at 38 weeks of pregnancy:

Eighty-five percent of babies are born within 2 weeks of their due date so your baby could be born any day now.

## CIRCUMCISION



If you have a boy, you will need to decide whether to have him circumcised after birth. Circumcision is the cutting away of the foreskin (a layer of skin that covers the tip of the penis).

Studies show that there are some medical benefits of circumcision, including a slight decreased risk of urinary tract infections, lower risk of infection of the foreskin, lower risk of getting cancer of the penis and a slightly lower risk of getting a sexually transmitted disease.

These medical reasons alone are not sufficient to recommend that all infant boys be circumcised. This personal decision is entirely up to the parents. If you decide to have your son circumcised this procedure will be performed by your obstetrician, usually before your baby is discharged from the hospital.

### Safe sleep for your baby

You have likely heard about the “Back to Sleep” efforts to educate parents and caregivers on ways to decrease the risk of your baby being lost to SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).

### As you begin to plan for your baby’s homecoming remember the following tips:

- All babies should be placed on their back on a firm sleep surface for every sleep time—nighttime and naptime.
- The baby should not sleep in the same bed with you. Room sharing is encouraged, but not bed sharing.
- Keep soft objects or loose bedding out of the crib or bassinet. This includes toys, bumper pads, pillows and blankets. Use sleep clothing with no other covering over the baby to keep the head and face uncovered during sleep.
- Don’t let your baby become overheated during sleep. Keep the temperature at a level that feels comfortable for an adult. Dress your baby in as much or as little clothing as you would wear.
- Devices to maintain sleep position such as wedges and positioners are not recommended since many have not been sufficiently tested for safety.

### POSTPARTUM BIRTH CONTROL

If you plan to use birth control after your baby is born, now may be a good time to discuss the options with your physician.

There are a wide variety of options available including permanent sterilization, implantable devices, oral contraceptives and injectable contraceptives.

Breastfeeding mothers are able to use both non-hormonal and progesterone-only options safely while breastfeeding. It is important to remember that breastfeeding alone is not an effective form of contraception despite many women not having periods while exclusively breastfeeding.

