

# Preparing for Your First Prenatal Appointment



## 1. Support Person

A family member, partner, or friend can ask questions, listen, and offer support at this first visit. Who would be a good person to ask?

## 2. Set the Stage

In addition to your medical history, your provider will want to know more about you. You can set the stage by sharing any feelings, experiences, or concerns that might affect your prenatal care. These are the things that won't show up on the intake form, but can help your provider understand you. Note if any of these things sound familiar and might be worth sharing. Put a check next to statements that apply to you. Put a star next to the items you want to share with your provider.

- ☐ I'm frustrated by past experiences with the medical community.
- ☐ I've experienced racism around my healthcare in the past.
- ☐ I'm concerned about medical costs.
- ☐ I'm concerned about making it to appointments because of \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ I'm concerned for my safety and the safety of my baby.
- ☐ I'm unsure of ways to access support and resources.
- ☐ I feel shy about sharing embarrassing information.
- ☐ I find it hard to speak up for myself.
- ☐ I'm unlikely to ask for help in a structured setting (example: group or class).

Anything else? Add notes below:

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### 3. Plan the Questions to Ask

Here are some questions you might like to ask. Use these suggestions as a starting point to come up with questions that are right for you.

- Which medications and supplements can I still take?
- What is the appointment schedule?
- Does your practice offer telehealth for any of the appointments?
- Will you be the only person I see or will I see multiple providers?
- I've read that Black people are 3 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes. How can we work together to make sure I'm not part of that statistic?
  - What can you do? What is your practice doing?
  - What can I do?
- I've read that low-dose aspirin can reduce the risk of birth complications like preeclampsia and preterm birth. Do you think it can help me? If so, when should I start and how much should I take?
- What are your thoughts about monitoring weight and blood pressure at home?
- Can you help me get a blood pressure cuff and help me learn how to use it?
- Does your practice offer any prenatal education classes, support groups, or group prenatal care?
- If you were me, what other questions would you ask now?

Add additional questions below:

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### 4. If Your Appointment Doesn't Go Well

If you feel like you aren't being heard or understood at your appointment, speak up. This is also something a friend or loved one can help you with. Things you might say:

- Can you repeat what you just said? *Note: This question gives you a chance to make sure you heard your provider correctly while also letting your provider replay what they just said.*

- Can we pause? I still have questions that haven't been answered.
- Can you clarify why you are asking that?
- It feels like you are not hearing me. Can we try again?

#### NOTE

If you and your provider aren't the right fit for each other for any reason, it's okay to find another option. Your provider won't be offended if you switch. Reach out to your care manager and ask for help finding a new provider.