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Pregnancy Check List

The following is an obstetric timeline overview and a check list of key 'to-do' activities. Once the surprise wears off that you are pregnant, this will be useful in tackling the logistics of what a pregnancy involves.

Confirm you are pregnant

You have missed your period and need to confirm if you are pregnant. A urine pregnancy test is a good idea (these tests are accurate but don't give an idea of how far along you are).

Once you have completed this test (presuming you get the pleasing 'two lines' confirming pregnancy), you should go to your GP and arrange a formal blood test.

The GP may also send you for a dating ultrasound. This is more important if you normally have an irregular cycle, to accurately determine your due date. It will also confirm your pregnancy viability and check it is progressing normally.

At this time, you should obtain a referral from the GP for Dr Peng and call to book in. Of course, we are always happy to chat with you at any point from when you have done your at-home pregnancy test!

You often start to develop pregnancy symptoms around 6 weeks – like nausea, tiredness and breast tenderness. You might want to chat with your GP regarding nausea medications that are safe to use.

This is also a very good time to double check that your private health insurance is up to date and covers obstetrics.

8 Week Booking Visit

This is the time for your booking appointment with Dr Peng. Your support person is absolutely welcome and encouraged to attend. Please ensure you bring your GP referral, Medicare and health insurer details and any relevant scans, results or details about other health matters.

You should allow approximately one hour for this appointment. A thorough history will identify any unique issues that might affect your pregnancy management. This includes pre-existing medical conditions and will help define if you are a low or higher risk pregnancy.

A bedside scan will also be done and upcoming chromosomal screening test options will be discussed in detail.

For a standard uncomplicated pregnancy, you will see Dr Peng monthly until 28 weeks (8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28 weeks).

11-13 Weeks

If you choose to undertake chromosomal screening, it will be completed in the 11-13 week window.

This screening looks for a variety of chromosomal conditions including Down Syndrome. Chromosomal screening has progressed in recent years and can include a maternal blood test (known as a NIPT ie non-invasive pregnancy test) or an ultrasound (Nuchal translucency ultrasound). Some people choose to do both a blood test AND ultrasound. The merits of these will have already been discussed with you at the booking visit. You can find out the gender of your baby with an NIPT. Some people want to know, some people want a surprise!

Many people choose to announce their pregnancy to their nearest and dearest once the results are back.

Between now and 20 weeks you can start considering at which hospital you would like to deliver. Hospitals provide on-line and on-site tours. There is no urgency to book a hospital until you are 20 weeks.

19-20 weeks

Dr Peng will give you a referral for a Morphology ultrasound. By 18 weeks baby's anatomy has finished developing and from here on in, will just grow bigger. This is a good time to check baby's organs.

Once you are 20 weeks pregnant, it is a good time to book into your chosen hospital. Dr Peng will provide you with a Doctor's Hospital Booking Letter. You need to complete an on-line admission directly with the hospital.

It is also a good time to start investigating antenatal classes. They can book out months in advance, and you don't want to miss out!

28 – 32 Weeks

At 28 weeks you officially enter the third and final trimester of your pregnancy! Your appointments generally become fortnightly at this time.

Gestational diabetes screening is done between 26-28 weeks. A sweet drink and a few blood tests tells us how well your body is coping with the demands of pregnancy. We also check for antibodies if you happen to be a negative blood group and give a protective medicine (anti-D).

A third trimester ultrasound is often done (especially if you have a higher risk pregnancy) during this period to check baby is happy and growing well and there are no placental issues.

A whooping cough vaccination is given between 28-32 weeks. If other close family members (eg partners, grandparents etc) have not had a whooping cough vaccination within the last 5-7 years, it is recommended that they also get a booster vaccination.

36 Weeks – 40 Weeks

You are in the very last stage of your pregnancy journey and your appointments are scheduled weekly.

Dr Peng will provide an hour long consultation to review your pregnancy and to discuss in detail the impending birth process.

This is a good time to pack your hospital bag, double-check your booking, ensure you know how to access delivery suite and have finalised your transport arrangements.

A vaginal swab is collected at 36 weeks to screen for vaginal infections that might affect the management of your labour.

40 Weeks

You have made it to your due date- baby might come any day (or may even have arrived!) We consider 37 weeks a full term pregnancy. We often review the potential for an induction if you are still pregnant at this time.

Delivery

When you go into labour you should call the delivery suite to let them know you are coming in and you should call Dr Peng directly on his private mobile. Bring your overnight bag and your antenatal card. Don't leave your run too late – better to be at the hospital than stuck in traffic!

Dr Peng, along with a team of midwives from the hospital will care for you during your birth and in the days following.

For a vaginal birth you have the option to stay up to four days in hospital. For a caesarean birth you have the option to stay up to five days in hospital.

Hospitals provide in-patient lessons on baby care and feeding – they are helpful and I recommend you take advantage of them.

Leaving Hospital

Congratulations – you did it! You have officially bloomed to motherhood. A new journey is just beginning. This can be a very emotional time.

It may or may not be exactly what you expected. It is a time of great excitement, but can also involve great stress as baby gets used to being in the world, and you get used to having a baby in YOUR world.

Post Natal period

Dr Peng will see you on discharge from the hospital and make sure everything is in place for a smooth transition to home. He can also provide a referral should you need it for home midwifery

support. He is very happy and encourages you to stay in contact through to your 6 week postnatal visit if you need any medical or emotional guidance or support.

This is the time to apply to have baby added to your Medicare card and to make contact with your local baby health centre and GP.

6 weeks Post Natal Visit

Your pregnancy is officially concluded with a post natal visit. This is the final appointment – and it is a good time to debrief on your pregnancy and birth and answer any final questions.

At this appointment, there will be a check to see your body is recovering from the rigours of pregnancy and birth and a chat about contraception and your ongoing gynaecology needs (eg pap smear status).

I also recommend a visit to a women's health pelvic floor physiotherapist and can give you a referral.

It's time to say good bye, but hopefully not for too long- We would love to care for you during your next pregnancy!