



Welcome

Bright Start[®] is a special program for our pregnant members. We want to help you to 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.

To reach the Bright Start department, call **1-833-475-2262 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)**.

If you need help with transportation to your health care provider appointments or want a list of county resources, please call Bright Start at **1-833-475-2262 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)**.

If you need help reading this, please call Member Services at **1-855-375-8811 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)**.

Important contact information

Member Services

1-855-375-8811 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)

Problems with medicines

1-855-375-8811 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)

Bright Start

1-833-475-2262 (TTY 1-866-209-6421)

24/7 Nurse Advice Line

1-888-674-8710

Rapid Response and Outreach Team

1-833-808-2262

AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina

Behavioral Health Crisis Line

1-833-712-2262

Poison Control

1-800-222-1222

Keys to Your Care[®]

This program provides you with helpful information during your pregnancy and your baby's first 15 months.

Text the word **NCMOM** to **85866** to join.

* Message and data rates may apply based on any agreements you have with your network service provider.

Tips to help you have a healthy pregnancy

- Follow your obstetric (OB) provider's advice.
- Keep all your prenatal appointments.
- Take a prenatal vitamin with folic acid.
- Drink at least eight glasses of water a day.
- Eat three meals a day and healthy snacks to help your baby grow.
- Don't smoke! Smoking increases your risk of having problems with your pregnancy. This includes delivering too early or having a baby who is too small.
- Don't drink alcohol.
- Don't take illegal drugs or medicines not prescribed by your provider.
- Stay active with safe exercises approved by your provider.
- Get plenty of rest.

Start your prenatal care as soon as you know you are pregnant

How often pregnant women should have prenatal appointments¹

0 – 28 weeks	One visit every month
28 – 36 weeks	One visit every two weeks
36 weeks – birth	One visit every week

You may need to see your provider more often if you have high risk or pregnancy problems.

Preterm labor²

Preterm labor means you have signs of labor before the 37th week of pregnancy. Preterm labor can cause your baby to be born too early. This can lead to health problems with your baby.

Signs of preterm labor can include:

- Contractions every 10 minutes or more
- Constant cramping that feels like having a heavy period
- Low, dull back pain that does not go away
- Blood or fluid leaking from the vagina
- Stomach cramps, sometimes with diarrhea

If you think you may be in labor and are not at least 37 weeks pregnant, call your OB provider or go to the hospital.

Type 1 and type 2 diabetes³

Diabetes is a condition where your blood glucose (sugar) is too high. Uncontrolled diabetes before and during pregnancy can be very unsafe for mom and baby. If you have pre-existing diabetes, talk to your provider about ways to keep your blood sugar under control. This may help lower your risk of problems with your pregnancy.

If you have any questions about diabetes and your pregnancy, call Bright Start.

Gestational diabetes⁴

Gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes that can happen to pregnant women. It is a condition where your blood sugar levels are too high. This can be unsafe for you and your baby.

Your provider can help you control and keep track of your blood sugar levels. Ask what is a good range for your levels and when are the best times to check them. Many women with gestational diabetes are able to control their blood sugar by eating healthy foods and exercising. But some may need to be prescribed medicine to help keep their blood sugar at a safe level.

See your provider regularly and keep all your prenatal appointments. Your provider can answer your questions and help you have a healthy pregnancy.

If you have any questions about gestational diabetes and your pregnancy, call Bright Start.

Pre-eclampsia⁵

Pre-eclampsia is a serious problem that can happen to women when they are pregnant. It is a condition where the mother has an increase in blood pressure, which can cause damage to her liver and kidneys. Pre-eclampsia can also cause serious complications with the baby.

The only way to know if you have pre-eclampsia is by getting tests run by your provider. But knowing possible symptoms may help when talking to your provider about how you feel.

Symptoms may include:

- Severe headaches
- Severe shortness of breath
- Blurred vision or other vision problems
- Pain in the upper abdomen
- Decrease in urine amount
- Swelling in the face and hands

If you have any questions about pre-eclampsia and your pregnancy, call Bright Start.



Hyperemesis⁶

Some pregnant women have nausea and throw up early in their pregnancy. That is called morning sickness. Other women have a more severe form of nausea and vomiting. This is called hyperemesis.

Symptoms of hyperemesis may include:

- Severe, ongoing nausea and vomiting
- Weight loss
- Signs of dehydration like having dark yellow urine or weakness
- Constipation

If you have any of these issues, talk to your OB provider.

If you have any questions about hyperemesis and your pregnancy, call Bright Start.



Kick counts⁷

Most people start to feel their baby move at about 18 weeks to 25 weeks. When you are at 28 weeks, start counting your baby's movements every day.

- It may help to lie down on your left side. Movements may be a kick, swish or roll.
- It is best to count your baby's movements about one hour after a meal or at the time of day your baby moves the most.
- You should feel at least 10 movements in two hours.

Call your provider if:

- You follow the steps above and do not feel 10 movements within two hours.
- The pattern of your baby's movement changes a lot over three or four days.
- You have not felt the baby move all day.

Try for a full-term pregnancy⁸

Having a full-term pregnancy can help your baby have a healthy start at life. Babies born too early may have more health problems at birth and later in life than babies born full term.

These may include:

- Breathing problems
- Difficulty feeding
- Development issues
- Cerebral palsy
- Problems with hearing and seeing
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

After you have a baby

The time after you have your baby is called postpartum. Try to take it easy the first few days after your baby's birth. If you have family and friends that can help you, let them. You should be given discharge instructions and follow-up appointments for you and your baby before leaving the hospital.

Before you leave the hospital, also remember to:

- Contact your Medicaid case worker to help you enroll your baby in AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina.
- Make a follow-up appointment with your baby's primary care provider (PCP).
- Make an appointment with your OB provider for your postpartum visit.
- Make an appointment with Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) if you need help with food or breast-feeding support.

We also recommend that you call AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina at 1-855-375-8811 (TTY 1-866-209-6421) to let us know about your baby.



Postpartum depression⁹

It's common for a woman to have "baby blues" for a few days after giving birth. But postpartum depression is more serious. It may require treatment with therapy or medicine.

Symptoms of postpartum depression are different for everyone, but may include:

- Feeling sad or angry
- Losing interest in things you used to enjoy
- Crying more often than usual
- Feeling distant from your loved ones
- Feeling guilty or worthless
- Thinking you are not a good mom
- Thinking you may hurt your baby, by accident or on purpose
- Feeling disconnected from your baby

About one in nine women experience postpartum depression. You are not alone. Help is available.

- Find a close family member, friend or health care professional to talk to.
- Join a support group in your community.
- Ask your provider if antidepressants are right for you.

Getting the right help can make all the difference for you, your baby and your family. If you have symptoms of postpartum depression, tell your OB provider right away.



Call **911** immediately if you have feelings of wanting to hurt yourself or your baby.

If you are having a behavioral health crisis, call the 24/7 Behavioral Health Crisis Service Hotline: **1-833-712-2262**

For more information, contact the AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina Bright Start program at **1-833-475-2262** (TTY **1-866-209-6421**).

Sources:

1. "Prenatal Care," Office on Women's Health, February 22, 2021, <https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/prenatal-care>
2. "Preterm Labor," MedlinePlus, <https://medlineplus.gov/preterm Labor.html>
3. "Diabetes During Pregnancy," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/maternal-infant-health/pregnancy-diabetes>
4. "Gestational Diabetes," Mayo Clinic, April 9, 2022, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/gestational-diabetes/symptoms-causes/syc-20355339>
5. "Preeclampsia," Mayo Clinic, April 15, 2022, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/preeclampsia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355745>
6. "Hyperemesis Gravidarum," MedlinePlus, January 2, 2023, <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001499.htm#:~:text=Hyperemesis%20gravidarum%20is%20extreme%2C%20persistent,that%20occurs%20in%20early%20pregnancy>
7. "Counting Baby Kicks," American Pregnancy Association, <http://americanpregnancy.org/while-pregnant/kick-counts>
8. "Premature Babies," MedlinePlus, <https://medlineplus.gov/prematurebabies.html>
9. "Symptoms of Depression Among Women," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 15, 2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductive-health/depression/>

**For more information, visit
Bright Start online.**



This is to help you learn about healthy prenatal care. It does not take the place of the care you get with your obstetric (OB) care provider. Please contact your OB care provider if you have questions or think you need to see them because of something you have read in this information. Always follow the care that your OB provider has put in place for you. If you have questions about anything you read in this information, talk to your OB care provider before you change anything your provider has told you to do.

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AmeriHealth Caritas™

North Carolina



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Auxiliary Aids and Interpreter Services

English: You can get free materials in large print and other auxiliary aids and services. Call **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**. If English is not your first language, free interpreter services are available. Call **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**.

Español (Spanish): Puede obtener sin cargo publicaciones en letra grande y otras asistencias y servicios auxiliares. Llame al **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**. Si el inglés no es su lengua materna, ofrecemos servicios de interpretación. Llame al **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**.

中文 (Simplified Chinese): 您可以获取以大号字体印刷的免费资料以及其他辅助设备及服务。请致电 **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**。如果英语不是您的第一语言，可以使用免费翻译服务。请致电 **1-855-375-8811 (TTY/TDD 1-866-209-6421)**。

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