

| what to bring to the maternity center |

Delivering your baby in a peaceful, comforting environment improves your childbirth experience. At Carolinas HealthCare System, our maternity suites are designed with you in mind.

Bringing a few personal items and necessities from home will help you feel more comfortable as you await baby's arrival. Use this checklist to help you prepare for your visit to the maternity center.

Babies seldom arrive on schedule, so it's wise to pack your suitcase a few weeks early.

SUITCASE CHECKLIST:

- Personal care items
(toothbrush, hair brush, barrettes or ties for long hair, lip balm, toiletries, etc.)
- Eyeglasses
- Pajamas or nightgown that allows for breastfeeding
- Bathrobe, socks, slippers
- Underwear (several pairs)
- Nursing bra
- Educational materials from classes you've taken
- Your written birth plan (if you have one)
- Camera/camcorder and extra batteries (video allowed after delivery)
- Personal music player and headphones
- Pillow with non-white pillowcase if you prefer your own
- Coins for vending machine
- Contact information for people you want to inform when baby arrives
- Cell phone and charger
- Insurance information (card, Social Security numbers, etc.)
and any paperwork needed for your hospital stay
- List of baby names you are considering
- Comfortable clothes to wear home
- Clothes for your baby to wear home
- Rear-facing infant car seat (required by law) already installed in your vehicle



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[CarolinasHealthCare.org/Womens-Services-Maternity](https://www.carolinashealthcare.org/Womens-Services-Maternity)



| getting ready for your baby |

You will soon experience a new beginning.

Use this checklist to prepare for your baby's birth and help make childbirth the special experience you want and deserve.



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Preregistration

When your delivery day arrives, your primary focus should be a healthy and stress-free delivery. Preregistration will smooth the admissions process, save time and help you avoid paperwork and other distractions when you arrive for your delivery.

You can preregister online at CarolinasHealthCare.org using the online tools tab or ask your provider for preregistration forms.

Insurance precertification

Some insurance carriers require precertification for childbirth. Be sure to contact your health insurance provider in advance to determine their requirements for covering the cost of childbirth.

Childbirth classes and tours

Carolinas HealthCare System offers classes to help you learn about pregnancy, delivery, breastfeeding, postpartum, newborn care and more.

We invite you to tour the Carolinas HealthCare System maternity center where you plan to deliver your baby, meet the staff and ask any questions you may have.

See the “Maternity classes” insert elsewhere in this packet for more information.

Develop a birth plan

Every birth is different and every mother has individual desires and expectations for her birth experience. Developing a birth plan ahead of time will help you communicate your wishes to your physician and care team. Your birth plan can address issues such as pain management, who you’d like present at your baby’s birth, labor aids and more.

Cord blood

The blood from your baby’s umbilical cord contains stem cells that can be used to treat more than 60 diseases. Collected cord blood can be stored for future use at a private bank for a fee or at a public donation bank at no cost. Private banking saves your baby’s cord blood for your family only. According to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the chance of your family using privately stored cord blood is low, about 1 in 2,700 people. Cord blood stored at public cord blood banks is available for anyone in need.

Consider cord blood collection and storage and make a decision before delivery. For more information, visit [ACOG.org](https://www.acog.org) and search “cord blood.”

Rooming in

Our maternity centers encourage mothers and babies staying in the same room, which promotes bonding and attachment and helps new mothers learn their baby’s early feeding cues. We also encourage early skin-to-skin contact, which helps keep baby warm, reduces crying and further promotes bonding and attachment.

Decide about feeding

Breast milk provides the perfect nutrition your baby needs to grow and thrive, and experts encourage mothers to breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months of their baby’s life.

While we strongly encourage breastfeeding, it may not be possible for all women. Your decision about feeding will be based on your comfort level, lifestyle and other medical considerations you may have. See the “Breastfeeding” and “Maternity classes” inserts elsewhere in this packet for more information.

Car seat

Choose an infant car seat for your vehicle so you can bring your baby home from the hospital safely. Be sure to install it before your delivery date according to the manufacturer’s and your vehicle instructions.

- **Babies should travel in a rear-facing car seat – installed in the back seat of your vehicle – for their first two years or until they reach the height and weight limits indicated by the car seat’s maker.**

Studies show that most parents use and install car seats improperly. Contact a certified child passenger safety technician to help ensure that you’ve installed your car seat correctly. Visit buckleupnc.org or safekids.org/car-seat for more information.

Choose a pediatrician

Regular healthcare is vital to raising a happy and healthy child. It’s important to choose a pediatrician before your child is born. Look for a provider you will feel comfortable with in a lasting healthcare relationship.

Carolinas HealthCare System has more than 150 board-certified pediatricians offering personalized care close to home. Partnering with one of our pediatricians gives you access to the most advanced pediatric care in the region through Levine Children’s Hospital, named a Best Children’s Hospital by *U.S. News & World Report* in multiple specialties and supported by Jeff Gordon Children’s Hospital.

Visit CarolinasHealthCare.org/Prenatal to find the pediatrician that’s right for you and your family.

Future birth control

Before your baby is born, talk about post-delivery birth control options with your doctor. If you are considering tubal ligation, discuss this with your doctor well in advance of your delivery so it can be performed during your hospital stay.