**Managing Your Pregnancy & Delivery**

Whether your pregnancy was the result of much planning *or* a surprise blessing, you can never take *too much* care of yourself and your baby. Bringing a child into the world is more than the birthing process alone; from delivery to postpartum, and working while pregnant to the proper nutrition for you *and* your baby, these resources and services can offer you support every step of the way. Pay special attention to the information about Doulas and Labor Coaches—*you* may be bringing your child into the world, but it often takes a team to shepherd mother and baby through a safe and successful delivery…

**Medical Information**

Whether it’s your first (1st) pregnancy or your fifth (5th), reviewing the most up-to-date medical information should be at the top of your list—especially since every pregnancy can be different. Healthy eating and prenatal vitamins are just the start of your journey; modern mothers are active career women, and accurate information can help you strike the balance between being on-the-go and going easy on your body…for the good of you *and* your baby.

**MedlinePlus | Pregnancy**

A comprehensive pregnancy page that covers the basics of pregnancy, sexual health while pregnant, back pain relief, and so much more. Make this your first stop, and get answers to *all* of your ‘Pregnancy 101 (and beyond)’ questions.

<https://medlineplus.gov/pregnancy.html>

**Planning and Delivery**

When it’s time to welcome your bundle of joy, so many delivery options and even labor positions are at your disposal. For example: Did you know that if you’re a mother under 35-years-old who has already been through the delivery process, you may be a candidate for a birthing center or an at-home birth? Did you know that you can donate umbilical cord blood, or keep your placenta? Which labor position do you think might be the most comfortable for you? The more research you do now, the less you’ll have to worry about on the day of your delivery—something very important, as you might not be in the right frame of mind to ask questions or make decisions when everyone’s focus is on the new life joining the world.

**March of Dimes | Being Pregnant at Work**

Turns out, there are best practices for breaking the news to your boss and taking your maternity leave. Plan your time away in advance and you can keep your attention where it belongs—on the newest member of your family.

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/being-pregnant-at-work.aspx>

**MedlinePlus | What to Include in Your Birth Plan**

Spoiler alert: It’s more than just packing a bag. Your delivery can be as unique as you are; review all of the options available to you pre-delivery, mid-delivery, and post-delivery.

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000567.htm>

**KidsHealth from Nemours | Birthing Centers & Hospital Maternity Services**

Learn about the differences between hospitals and birthing centers; what type of delivery services you can anticipate having access to; the kinds of health professionals on staff; and, of course, which facility might be best for you.

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/birth-centers-hospitals.html>

**North Houston Birth Center**

Especially friendly to and supportive of women of color.

<https://www.nhbirth.com>

**The Birthing Place**

Women of color friendly.

<http://birthingplacemidwifehoustonnaturalhomewaterbirthservicesnearme.com>

**Houston Birth House**

**A**dditional information about home and water births.

<https://www.thehoustonbirthhouse.com>

**Houston Methodist | Childbirth Center at Texas Medical Center**

Explore the variety of facilities here.

<https://www.houstonmethodist.org/womens-services/locations/texas-medical-center/childbirth-center/>

**Houston Methodist | Childbirth & Prenatal Services**

Services available throughout pregnancy, delivery, and more.

<https://www.houstonmethodist.org/womens-services/pregnancy-childbirth/>

**Women’s Memorial Herman | Family Birth Center**

Personalized experiences and special care for high-risk pregnancies.

<https://womens.memorialhermann.org/family-birth-center/>

**Medline Plus | Tips for Labor Coaches**

Whether your labor coach is a partner, parent, friend, or professional, this article may help you

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000545.htm>

**Kids Health from Nemours | Recovering From Delivery**

Just for Mommies, this page answers all for your questions (and things you might not have even known to ask) about what happens after you deliver your little dumpling. Physical and emotional changes, healing, episiotomy care, resuming sex, knowing when to call the doctor—no subject is too small or personal in this article.

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/recovering-delivery.html>

**KidsHealth from Nemours | A Guide for First-Time Parents**

This comprehensive article offers plenty of ‘Baby 101’ knowledge that will be a big help for new parents. It will specifically be a welcome resource if everyone around you suffers from ‘the curse of knowledge’, and has forgotten how nerve-racking having your first child can be. Soothing, swaddling, diapering, burping…it’s everything you’ve ever wanted to know, but may be embarrassed to ask.

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/guide-parents.html>

**Nursing**

 Although breastfeeding is a natural process, it doesn’t come naturally or easily to every woman—and that’s *okay*. If you are new to nursing or struggling to nurse, these resources will help you explore the process. From giving your body the nutrients it needs to produce the best milk possible, to learning the signs of your baby being properly positioned and ‘latched on’, there is a world of breastfeeding information at your fingertips. Need even more help? Consider going to a lactation specialist for hands-on training and support.

**Women’s Health | Your Guide to Breastfeeding**

For medically sound background information, MedlinePlus is an excellent first resource. You can follow this up with a step-by-step comprehensive nursing guide available for download.

<https://www.womenshealth.gov/files/your-guide-to-breastfeeding.pdf>

**MedlinePlus | Breastfeeding Self-Care**

To give your baby the best milk possible, it is vital that you take care of yourself. Here is a handy list of nutritional information, as well as Dos and Don’ts.

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000631.htm>

**Local Resources for Lactating Mothers**

For support within the city of Houston and state of Texas, these resources will offer you a wealth of information not only about nursing, but about programs and assistance that you may not be aware of.

**Harris County Public Health | Breastfeeding Resources**

Take advantage of these resources for some of your immediate needs related to nursing.

<https://publichealth.harriscountytx.gov/Services-Programs/Services/Breastfeeding-Resources>

**Texas Health and Human Services | WIC Breastfeeding**

Get the nursing information *and* lactation support you need in Texas.

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/wic-providers/wic-breastfeeding>

**Breastmilk - Every Ounce Counts | Helpful Resources**

This is an expansive page with a lot of great information for Moms, *including* local mental and emotional health resources, *and* recommended books.

<https://www.breastmilkcounts.com/moms-playground/helpful-resources/>

**Lactation Specialists and Personalized Support**

Want to learn more about Lactation Specialists? Here are two you can consult; by *no means* are they the only two (2) available in Houston, but it’s nice to be able to speak with a fellow woman of color, or have the option of a virtual consult—especially when you’re an exhausted new Mom.

**SOS Lactation | Short Order Support**

Lactation Specialist Leah Whitley is a fellow woman of color who boasts over a decade of experience and 1,500+ satisfied Clients. She offers one-on-one support remotely or in-person within the comfort of your home, as well as group classes.

<https://soslactation.com>

**BABE | Bay Area Breastfeeding and Education**

Lactation Specialists offering virtual consultations, pre *and* postnatal consultations, and classes.

<https://www.bayareabreastfeeding.net>

**Doulas**

So what *is* a Doula, and why might you want one? These resources will answer this common question, *and* point you towards local resources that can help you find a doula of your own. By the way, the short answer is: A Doula is capable of offering you guidance and support every step of your pregnancy—carrying, delivery, *and* postnatal care; the last part is particularly important, as a new Mom can *never* have *too much* help! By no means is this list comprehensive (and these Doulas are neither the only women operating within Houston nor endorsed by Black Girl Health Foundation), but this list *will* help you get started on your path to finding the best Doula for you.

**DONA International | What is a Doula?**

Doulas of North America (DONA) is one of the foremost certifying organizations for accredited doulas; visit their website to discover the finer points of what a Doula is, what they can offer you, and the kind of training they undergo.

<https://www.dona.org/what-is-a-doula/>

**Doula Houston**

Consultation and referral website.

<https://doulahoustontx.com>

**Houston Doula Cooperative**

An assortment of doulas with a variety of specialists.

<http://houstondoulacooperative.com>

**Denise M Bernard | LCCE, CD (DONA), SBD**

Doula of color.

(832) 277-1966
info@douladenise.com
[http://www.douladenise.com](http://www.douladenise.com/)

**Labor and Postpartum Services | DONA Trained**

Susan Miller—wife, mother, and doula.

<http://www.houstondoula.com>

**Patti Ann Heimlich | LMT (MT9088), CD (DONA), ICCE**
Virtual doula services.

(281) 513-1030
Pattiann19@aol.com
[http://www.hpregnancy.com](http://www.hpregnancy.com/)

**Sage Beginnings**

A local doula that also has a multicultural family.

<http://houstondoulas.org>

**COVID QUICKSHEET**

Five (5) fast ways to keep you and your baby safe when nursing during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**TRUE or FALSE**

Breastmilk is no different than cow’s milk, goat’s milk, or milk from any other mammal.

**FALSE**

Breast milk is designed to provide the appropriate amount of calories and optimal nutrition to support the growth and health of a human infant.

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/diet-and-micronutrients/index.html>

**TRUE or FALSE**

It is unsafe for me to get vaccinated or receive booster shots while I am nursing.

**FALSE**

The CDC states that the only vaccines currently listed as “Contraindication for Use in Lactation” (meaning these vaccines should not be received while nursing) are Smallpox (live virus) and Yellow Fever (live virus). A f*ull list of vaccine advisement is available from the link below*.

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/vaccinations-medications-drugs/vaccinations.html>

**TRUE or FALSE**

If I have COVID-19 symptoms or have contracted COVID-19, I can continue to nurse my baby.

**TRUE**

Breast milk is the best source of nutrition for most infants, and it provides protection against many illnesses. With additional care, the CDC states that you can still give your baby your milk directly through nursing or pumping, pending the severity your condition.

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/maternal-or-infant-illnesses/covid-19-and-breastfeeding.html>

**TRUE or FALSE**

If I’m too ill to nurse, switching my baby to formula is my only option.

**FALSE**

According to UNICEF, in addition to enhanced hygiene, if you find yourself too ill to nurse due to contracting COVID-19, your baby can be bottle-fed your extracted breastmilk by a fellow family member or caretaker living in your home. If necessary, babies can even be spoon fed milk or practice drinking from a sippy cup, dependent upon their age.

<https://www.unicef.org/eap/breastfeeding-during-covid-19>

**TRUE or FALSE**

Even if I’m still nursing during the COVID-19 Pandemic, I am able to travel.

**TRUE**

Traveling with an infant is less than ideal, even in the best of times, let alone during a pandemic; still, you *can* travel while you’re nursing—whether your little one is in tow or not. The CDC has recommendations for air travel while lactating *with* and *without* your baby.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddlernutrition/breastfeeding/travel-recommendations.html>