

What to know about maternity care.

Pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period are important times for women and families. Here are some facts and tips to consider related to women's health and childbirth.



Facts to consider:



Most women (**77%**) **start prenatal care during the first trimester**, which is important to encouraging healthy, full-term deliveries.¹



Early, non-medically indicated **C-sections are linked to a higher risk of complications**, including infection, hemorrhage and blood clots.²



Approximately **32%** of all U.S. babies are **born via C-section**.³



Compared to many other high-income countries, the U.S. ranks worse in terms of maternal mortality. (**20.7 deaths per 100,000 live births**)⁴

Tips to consider for expectant mothers:



Plan for postpartum care. After delivery, mothers must adapt to physical, psychological and emotional changes. Prepare for your postpartum needs with your care provider and discuss breastfeeding, future pregnancy plans and the risk of postpartum depression. A full assessment within 6 weeks of delivery is recommended.⁵



Take charge of your health by eating well, exercising and getting enough sleep.



Know your costs and choose a care provider and birth location that suits you.⁶



Research your maternity benefits and rights, including your company's leave policy and rights you may have under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016 (www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67_03.pdf)

²The Journal of Maternal-Fetal & Neonatal Medicine, 2016 (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/14767058.2015.1023187?src=recsys&journalCode=ijmf20>)

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/delivery.htm>)

⁴America's Health Rankings 2018 (<https://www.americashealthrankings.org>)

⁵The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (<https://www.acog.org/About-ACOG/News-Room/News-Releases/2016/Ob-Gyns-Stress-the-Importance-of-Postpartum-Care-The-Fourth-Trimester?IsMobileSet=false>)

⁶UnitedHealthcare Newsroom, 2017 (<https://newsroom.uhc.com/health/healthy-pregnancy.html>)