

Delivering a healthy start
for your baby!



For more information, call
Syracuse Healthy Start at
435-2000

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Consumer's Health Dictionary



Introduction

This glossary of terms includes commonly used words that you may hear from your Doctor during and after your pregnancy. Healthy Start has developed this booklet to help you better understand the terms used by your health care provider.

Syracuse Healthy Start promotes healthy pregnancies and healthy babies through community partnerships, community referrals, health education, case management and home visitation.

The goal of the program is to help moms have healthy babies and help families give their babies a healthy start!

If you need a nurse or home visitor or help with your pregnancy or infant, call Syracuse Healthy Start at 435-2000.

Glossary of Terms

Alpha-fetoprotein (AFP) test: A blood test done between the 16th and 18th week of pregnancy to help determine if the fetus has a problem (like spina bifida, a deformity of the spinal column, etc.). It can also help to screen for Down Syndrome.

Amniocentesis: A test to look for birth defects. During the test, amniotic fluid (bag of water) is taken from the mother by inserting a needle through her abdomen and into her uterus (womb).

Amniotic fluid (bag of water): Watery liquid that surrounds and protects the fetus in a woman's uterus.

Anemia: An abnormally low number of red blood cells (the cells in the blood that carry oxygen to the tissues).

Antibodies: Substances in the blood that protect a person from illness. Antibodies are also found in breast milk.

APGAR score: A score given to a newborn baby to check the condition of the baby. It rates the baby's heart rate, muscle tone, circulation, reflexes, and breathing ability. The APGAR score is observed at one minute and five minutes after birth. A perfect score is ten.

Areola: The dark area on the breast surrounding the nipple.

Blood group or type: A classification of blood. Each person belongs either to type O, A, B, or AB. Differences in blood type between mother and baby (ABO incompatibilities) can lead to anemia and jaundice in the baby. Blood is also classified as Rh positive or Rh negative. When an Rh negative mother carries an Rh positive child, antibodies in her blood may cross the placenta and attack her baby's red blood cells, resulting in severe anemia and jaundice in the newborn.

Conversion of Pounds & Ounces to Grams

	Ounces																					
Pounds	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15						
0	-	28	57	85	113	142	170	198	227	255	283	312	340	369	397	425						
1	454	482	510	539	567	595	624	652	680	709	737	765	794	822	850	879						
2	907	936	964	992	1021	1049	1077	1106	1134	1162	1191	1219	1247	1276	1304	1332						
3	1361	1389	1417	1446	1474	1503	1531	1559	1588	1616	1644	1673	1701	1729	1758	1786						
4	1814	1843	1871	1899	1928	1956	1984	2013	2041	2070	2098	2126	2155	2183	2211	2240						
5	2268	2296	2325	2353	2381	2410	2438	2466	2495	2523	2551	2580	2608	2637	2665	2693						
6	2722	2750	2778	2807	2835	2863	2892	2920	2948	2977	3005	3033	3062	3090	3118	3147						
7	3175	3203	3232	3260	3289	3317	3345	3374	3402	3430	3459	3487	3515	3544	3572	3600						
8	3629	3657	3685	3714	3742	3770	3799	3827	3856	3884	3912	3941	3969	3997	4026	4054						
9	4082	4111	4139	4167	4196	4224	4252	4281	4309	4337	4366	4394	4423	4451	4479	4508						
10	4536	4564	4593	4621	4649	4678	4706	4734	4763	4791	4819	4848	4876	4904	4933	4961						
11	4990	5018	5046	5075	5103	5131	5160	5188	5216	5245	5273	5301	5330	5358	5386	5415						
12	5443	5471	5500	5528	5557	5585	5613	5642	5670	5698	5727	5755	5783	5812	5840	5868						
13	5897	5925	5953	5982	6010	6038	6067	6095	6123	6152	6180	6209	6237	6265	6294	6322						
14	6350	6379	6407	6435	6464	6492	6520	6549	6577	6605	6634	6662	6690	6719	6747	6776						
15	6804	6832	6860	6889	6917	6945	6973	7002	7030	7059	7087	7115	7144	7172	7201	7228						
16	7257	7286	7313	7342	7371	7399	7427	7456	7484	7512	7541	7569	7597	7626	7654	7682						
17	7711	7739	7768	7796	7824	7853	7881	7909	7938	7966	7994	8023	8051	8079	8108	8136						
18	8165	8192	8221	8249	8278	8306	8335	8363	8391	8420	8448	8476	8504	8533	8561	8590						
19	8618	8646	8675	8703	8731	8760	8788	8816	8845	8873	8902	8930	8958	8987	9015	9043						
20	9072	9100	9128	9157	9185	9213	9242	9270	9298	9327	9355	9383	9412	9440	9469	9497						
21	9525	9554	9582	9610	9639	9667	9695	9724	9752	9780	9809	9837	9865	9894	9922	9950						
22	9979	10007	10036	10064	10092	10120	10149	10177	10206	10234	10262	10291	10319	10347	10376	10404						

Centigrade (C.)	Fahrenheit (F.)
36.0	96.8
36.5	97.7
37.0	98.6
37.5	99.5
38	100.4
38.5	101.3
39.0	102.2
39.5	103.1
40.0	104.0
40.5	104.9
41.0	105.8
41.5	106.7

“Bloody Show”: A discharge of blood and mucus from the uterus that may signal the beginning of labor.

Bonding: The strong feelings of closeness between a newborn baby and those who love him or her.

Braxton Hicks Contractions: The normal contractions of the uterus that a woman feels during her pregnancy. They help the uterus get ready for labor. If a woman feels four or more in an hour, they may indicate preterm or regular labor.

Breech position: Refers to the position of the baby in the womb when the baby’s feet or bottom are in place to be born first.

Cervix: The lower section of the uterus (womb) that shortens (effaces) and opens (dilates) during delivery.

Circumcision: The surgical removal of the loose fold of skin (called the foreskin) that covers the end of the penis. This operation is usually performed shortly after birth if parents want it done.

Colic: A stomach ache in a baby which causes the baby to pull up his or her knees and cry or scream for long periods of time. Usually occurs during the first three months of life. Colicky babies can be difficult to comfort because the cause of colic is not known.

Colostrum: The yellow, “first milk” a mother produces in her breasts after her baby is born. Colostrum has special antibodies which help protect a baby against sickness.

Conception: The joining of the egg and sperm which results in pregnancy.

Glossary of Terms

Condom (Rubber): A cover that is worn over a man’s erect penis during intercourse to block the man’s sperm from entering the vagina. The condom protects a woman from getting pregnant and can help protect both partners from contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

Contractions: The regular tightening of the uterine muscles as they work to open the cervix during labor, to push the baby down the birth canal, and to stop bleeding from the uterus after the baby is born. Also known as “labor pains.”

C-section (Cesarean section or cesarean delivery): The birth of a baby through surgical cuts in the abdomen and uterus (or womb).

D and C (Dilation and Curettage): A medical procedure in which a doctor dilates (opens) the cervix and scrapes the lining of the uterus, usually to stop heavy or unusual bleeding.

Diabetes: A disease in which the body cannot produce insulin or cannot use insulin properly. This causes high blood sugar levels.

EDC (estimated date of confinement): The estimated date that a pregnant woman will give birth to her baby. Most babies are born near but not actually on this day.

Edema: Swelling of legs, hands, and face caused from excess fluid in tissues.

Egg: The female reproductive cell released by the ovaries.

Epidural: A type of spinal anesthesia used to relieve pain during labor and cesarean births. An epidural numbs mothers from the top of the uterus down to her toes and allows her to be awake for the birth of her baby.

Conversion of Inches to Centimeters

Inches	Centimeters
24	61.0
24 ½	62.2
25	63.5
25 ½	64.8
26	66.1
26 ½	67.4
27	68.7
27 ½	69.9
28	71.2
28 ½	72.5
29	73.8
29 ½	75.1
30	76.4
30 ½	77.6

Inches	Centimeters
17	43.2
17 ½	44.4
18	45.7
18 ½	47.0
19	48.3
19 ½	49.5
20	50.8
20 ½	52.1
21	53.3
21 ½	54.6
22	55.9
22 ½	57.2
23	58.4
23 ½	59.7

Inches	Centimeters
10	25.4
10 ½	26.7
11	27.9
11 ½	29.2
12	30.5
12 ½	31.8
13	33.0
13 ½	34.3
14	35.6
14 ½	36.8
15	38.1
15 ½	39.4
16	40.6
16 ½	41.9

Conversion Tables

- Inches to Centimeters
- Temperature Conversion
- Pounds and Ounces to Grams

Episiotomy: A small surgical cut that may be done to widen the vaginal opening during childbirth. Stitches are used to repair this cut after the baby is born.

Fallopian tubes: Tubes in a woman's body which carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus. The usual place where an egg and sperm join and conception begins.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS): A set of birth defects caused by a woman drinking too much alcohol during pregnancy. Babies with FAS can have physical and mental problems including mental retardation.

Fetal monitor: A machine that gives the health care provider information about the well-being of the baby by recording the baby's heartbeat.

Fetus: The unborn baby. In medical terms, it's the growing pregnancy after the 8th week of development until the time of birth.

Fontanelle: The soft spots on a newborn's head. Usually closed by one year of age.

Full term baby: A baby that is born between 38 and 42 weeks after conception.

Gestational age: Estimated age of fetus, measured by number of weeks since last menstrual period.

Gestational diabetes: Diabetes that develops during pregnancy. The mother's blood sugar rises due to hormones secreted during pregnancy and the mother cannot produce enough insulin to handle the higher blood sugar levels. Although gestational diabetes usually goes away after pregnancy, about 60 percent of women who have had gestational diabetes eventually develop Type 2 diabetes.

Glossary of Terms

Hemoglobin: A substance in red blood cells that contains iron and carries oxygen.

Hemorrhoids: Swelling of the blood vessels of the rectum. Caused by increased pressure of the growing uterus on the pelvic veins. Can be made worse by constipation. Also called piles.

Immunization: Also called shots or vaccination. Process in which a substance or a vaccine is injected into the body or swallowed to protect against infectious disease that can cause serious illness or even death.

Impetigo: Skin condition usually caused by a bacterial infection. Symptoms include pustules that become crusted and break. Spread by touching draining sores.

Jaundice: The yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes.

Labor: The contractions of a pregnant woman's uterus that causes the cervix to shorten (efface) and open (dilate) to push the baby down into the birth canal and out of the mother's body.

Lactose intolerance: A body's inability to digest milk.

Lead poisoning: Poisoning that can be caused by breathing in lead dust, eating lead paint chips, or drinking water which has been sitting in lead pipes for more than a few hours. Lead poisoning can damage children's brains, nerves, and blood and affect their ability to learn. Exposure to lead can also harm a pregnant woman's developing baby.

Lochia: The discharge from the uterus of blood, mucus, and tissue during the first weeks following childbirth. The color of this discharge gradually changes from red to pink to brown to a yellowish white.

Trimester: A stage or period of time lasting three months. The 9 months of a pregnancy are divided into three trimesters. 1-3 months = 1st trimester; 3-6 months = 2nd trimester; 6-9 months = 3rd trimester.

Toxemia (Preeclampsia): A disorder during pregnancy or the post-partum period. There is a sudden rise in blood pressure, protein in the urine, and swelling (edema), especially of the hands and face.

Ultrasound: A test during pregnancy that uses sound waves to take a picture of the fetus. It is also called a sonogram.

Umbilical cord: Cord that connects the fetus's belly button to the placenta. It contains veins and arteries through which the fetus is nourished and through which waste products are carried away.

Uterus: Organ located deep inside a woman's pelvic cavity where the fetus grows and is nourished during pregnancy. Also called the womb.

UTI (Urinary tract infection): An infection of the bladder or urinary tract.

Vagina (birth canal): The passage from a woman's uterus to the outside of her body through which the baby passes during birth.

Vaginal delivery: The birth of a baby through the birth canal or vagina.

Glossary of Terms

SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome): The death of an infant during sleep from unknown causes.

Sitz bath: A shallow (two to three inch) warm water bath, often recommended for women who have just delivered babies to help ease discomfort.

Sonogram: A painless test during pregnancy that uses sound waves to take a picture of the fetus. It is also called an ultrasound.

Sperm: The male reproductive cells, produced by the testicles and ejaculated from the penis in semen.

Spontaneous abortion: A miscarriage, any pregnancy that ends spontaneously before the fetus can survive.

Stillbirth: A fetus that is dead before or at delivery.

Stools: Bowel movements.

Sucking reflex: The reflex babies have right after birth that help them to find their mother's breast and begin sucking.

Supplemental feedings: When a baby is fed formula in addition to being breastfed.

Swaddle: To wrap a young baby firmly but gently in a blanket. Often helps to comfort a fussy baby.

Thrush: A yeast infection. Signs of thrush are white patches that appear in a baby's mouth - on the tongue, the gums, the roof of the mouth, or inside the cheeks. The infection is most common in newborn babies. Thrush can be painful but is treatable with medicine.

Low birthweight: A newborn baby that weighs less than five and one-half pounds (2500 grams) at birth.

Mastitis: A breast infection in a lactating woman that occurs when the breasts are not regularly emptied of milk. Usually begins with engorged breasts or clogged milk ducts. Usually accompanied by fever or flu-like feeling.

Meconium: Greenish-black material present in the fetal intestinal tract before birth and usually passed during the first days after birth.

Meconium aspiration: The inhaling by the baby of meconium-stained amniotic fluid. Serious breathing problems may result.

Meconium staining: Refers to amniotic fluid stained with meconium. In some instances, meconium stained fluid indicates the fetus was in distress before birth.

Miscarriage: Any pregnancy that ends spontaneously before the fetus can survive.

Mongolian spots: Dark blue or purple irregular bruise-like areas, usually occur on buttocks or lower back of infants whose parents are African-American, Asian or Mediterranean. Disappears suddenly, usually by four years of age.

Morning sickness: Nausea and/or vomiting felt by some women during pregnancy. Usually goes away after the first trimester.

Navel: Belly button.

Neonatal: Newborn children under one month of age.

Neonatal Intensive Care: Specialized technical, individualized medical care provided to very sick newborn babies.

Glossary of Terms

Non-stress test (NST): A test to check that the baby is doing ok inside the mother's uterus. A fetal monitor is placed on the pregnant woman's abdomen for about 20 minutes. She is asked to push the button every time she feels the baby move. The baby's heart rate is recorded and looked at when the baby moves or if the woman has a contraction. The test is then read by the doctor.

Ovaries: The female sex glands above the uterus that produce eggs and hormones that control female reproduction.

Phototherapy: Treatment of infants with jaundice by exposing them to bright lights called bililights.

PKU (Phenylketonuria) test: A required blood test given to babies soon after birth to screen them for a rare but serious disorder which may cause mental retardation.

Placenta (afterbirth): The organ attached to the wall of the uterus to which the umbilical cord is attached. Through the umbilical cord the fetus receives food and gets rid of waste.

Placenta abruptio: Premature separation of the placenta from the wall of the uterus, usually accompanied by bleeding.

Placenta previa: A condition in which the placenta is abnormally positioned over the cervix; can result in bleeding during middle or late pregnancy. Cesarean delivery of the baby is often necessary.

Postpartum: The period of time, usually six weeks, after a mother has given birth to her baby.

Postpartum depression: The feelings of depression some women may have in the first weeks after they have a baby. More serious than the "baby blues" and should be treated by a doctor.

Post-term: After 42 weeks gestation.

Preeclampsia (toxemia): A disorder during pregnancy or the post-partum period. There is a sudden rise in blood pressure, protein in the urine, and swelling (edema), especially of the hands and face.

Premature baby: A baby who is born too early, usually before the 37th week of pregnancy.

Premature rupture of the membranes: The breaking of the bag of water around the fetus before the beginning of labor.

Prenatal care: Health care a woman receives while she is pregnant.

Preterm labor: Labor before the 37th week of pregnancy that can result in the birth of a preterm or premature baby.

Reye Syndrome: A rare but serious illness that follows a viral illness and is sometimes caused when young children are given aspirin. Because of this risk, young children and infants should not be given aspirin for any reason.

RhoGAM: Injection given to a mother with Rh negative blood after the birth of an Rh positive baby. These injections prevent the mother from developing antibodies that could harm a future Rh positive baby.

Semen: Fluid ejaculated or shot from the penis at the time of orgasm. This fluid contains sperm—unless a man has had a vasectomy.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs): Diseases that are passed from one person to another through sexual contact. Sometimes called venereal disease.

Siblings: Term used to refer to a person's brothers and/or sisters.