

Pregnant Women: Worry No More

Your family doctor is there for you

By Marlene Harris

Pregnancy presents challenges never faced before. Body parts do funny things, emotions run the gamut, and every new physical sensation makes you wonder if the baby is safe. Your path to sanity is the family medicine physician who practices obstetrics—choosing the right one makes all the difference in your baby’s health.

Trevver Buss, MD, family medicine physician from Prairie Clinic, has been delivering for 12 years. “Women should be able to ask their doctors anything. You’re a team.

“This can be a stressful time. The Internet bombards people with all kinds of inaccurate information. Our job is to provide objective viewpoints and educated answers.”

Ask the doctor several questions. How long have you been practicing obstetrics? How much time do I have for appointments? When should I call you?

You want to feel comfortable with your provider; you'll spend plenty of time together during those prenatal visits—at least 12. One benefit of obstetric care from the family doctor is the established relationship you have.

Maribeth Baker, MD, a family medicine physician from Prairie Clinic, believes the doctor-patient relationship is important during pregnancy. “Women need empathy and a doctor who knows how to listen. It’s also important to remain open-minded.

“Part of our job is to inform and provide healthy choices, not enforce our own beliefs.”

The family medicine physician who practices obstetrics does so after years of training and experience; they're passionate about the work. They complete a three-year residency program, which includes thorough training in their chosen subspecialty focus. Like all doctors, they must fulfill rigorous educational requirements yearly and recertification exams every six to seven years.

Many family doctors are also certified in neonatal resuscitation and advanced life support in obstetrics.

Prenatal care from your family doctor makes sense. Patients appreciate the continuity of care. The same doctor can take care of mom, baby, and the whole family's multiple health care needs.

Family medicine is different from other specialties because the family doctor is trained to look at the whole person and all the systems involved, not just one body part.

Buss said, “Family medicine is a unique specialty. We prepare the whole family for the new arrival, including the impact on siblings and the parents’ relationship. We find solutions.”

Don’t forget to ask yourself questions after you’ve met with the new family doctor. Were all my questions answered? Did I feel comfortable? If not, talk about it, and see how your doctor responds.

The hospital is important too. Pick one where your own doctor is present for the delivery and not a stranger on-call. It’s hard to find, but it makes a difference.

Another choice at some family medicine clinics is a certified nurse midwife like Glenna Spears, WHNP, CNM, who sees patients at Prairie Clinic and surrounding communities. “There are many options for hospital birth, including the whirlpool tub. A midwife’s goal is to help the mother create her ideal birth experience, and keep both mom and baby safe.

“A midwife will always have a consulting physician available.”

If you’re having a hard time getting pregnant and need medical advice, you can see your family doctor for that too. You’ll get the help you need. Family medicine physicians know when it’s time to refer to another specialist—they have your best interests in mind.

Only the best health care will do when the miracle of life is growing inside you. Get a doctor who will be there through all life’s joys and trials. You and your baby deserve it.

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