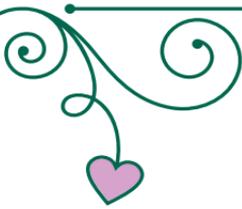


Embracing Life

a special guide
and calendar for moms





South Country

HEALTH ALLIANCE

South Country Health Alliance Member Services

1-866-567-7242, TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711

Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Or visit our website: www.mnscha.org

Editor:	Nikita Woltersen
Contributors:	Bobbi Jo Dahl, Michele Grose
Graphic Design:	Nikita Woltersen
Illustration:	https://all-free-download.com
Sources:	Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, https://www.cdc.gov/ MayoClinic.com, http://mayoclinic.com/ Minnesota Department of Health, http://www.health.state.mn.us Minnesota Oral Health Project, www.crushcavities.com American Dental Association, www.mouthhealthy.com

Our special thanks to the South Country Family Health Committee for their information, thoughts, and feedback during the editing of this book.

Embracing Life #6219 © 2022 South Country Health Alliance



Scan QR code with your smartphone to access additional content.



About Me



If found, return to

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Clinic: _____ Phone: _____

Hospital: _____ Phone: _____

My Due Date _____

Prescriptions _____

Critical Medical Conditions _____

_____ Blood Type _____

County Financial Worker Name & Phone _____

County Public Health Nurse Phone _____



Public Health Nurse Visits

The nurse visit is a great way to provide you with information and resources to give you and your baby the healthiest start. Prenatal and postpartum visits with a public health nurse are available to you upon request and are provided at no cost to you. Call the number for your county listed on page 32.

The public health nurse will:

- ☞ Answer your questions.
- ☞ Talk with you about the normal changes to your body during and after pregnancy, and when to call the doctor.
- ☞ Provide resources that can help you and your family.
- ☞ Give you useful information on your baby's growth and development, health and safety issues, nutrition, and parenting.

24-hr Nurse Advice Line

Answers are only a phone call away.

Do you have a medical concern or question? Are you or your baby ill and you don't know what to do? Call our 24-hour nurse advice line if you have a question about your pregnancy, yourself, or your baby that cannot wait until your next doctor visit.

Help is a phone call away. Call our nurse line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Trained nurses are ready to talk with you. You can find the number on the back of your South Country member ID card.

Table of Contents

2-11 **Important Information During Pregnancy**

Public Health Nurse Visits
24-Hr Nurse Help Line
Important Information
Dental Care
Prenatal Care
Pre-term Labor
Transportation
United Way

12-23 **Pregnancy Calendar**

Useful weekly updates and checklist items during your pregnancy

24-31 **After Birth Care**

Breast Feeding
Car Seats
Continued Learning
Finding a Doctor and well-care visits
Postpartum Depression

32 **Resources and Numbers**

Member Services
Smoking Cessation Information
United Way and WIC
County Public Health Numbers



Additional content is available at **Embracing Life Online** <https://mnscha.org/members/embracing-life-online>. **Look for the flower!**

For quick access on a smartphone, scan the QR code on the inside front or back cover.





Important!

When you are pregnant and during breastfeeding

- ! **Avoid Caffeine.** It is best to avoid caffeine while pregnant and breastfeeding as it is a stimulant and a diuretic. Babies do not have a mature metabolism and cannot metabolize caffeine. Caffeine also increases your blood pressure and heart rate, which are both bad during pregnancy.
- ! **Avoid Alcohol.** When you drink alcohol, your baby does too. There is **NO AMOUNT** of alcohol that has been proven safe during pregnancy. Drinking alcohol while you are pregnant or breast feeding can cause **permanent** physical problems and problems with behavior and learning for your baby. These conditions are called Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs).
- ! **Stay Drug-Free.** When you use any drugs, your baby does too. Any amount of drugs you take may be an overdose for your baby, including prescription drugs. Talk to your doctor about what drugs are safe to take.
- ! **Avoid Marijuana Use.** Whether for medical or recreational use, THC crosses the placenta and enters the baby's bloodstream which can lead to growth deficiencies and long-term behavioral problems. As the child gets older, they can show gaps in problem-solving skills, memory, and the ability to remain attentive.



! **Stay Smoke-Free.** When you smoke, your baby smokes too. Smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping) during pregnancy or being around people who smoke can cause pre-term labor. Nicotine can damage a developing baby's brain and lungs. Some flavorings used in e-cigarettes may also be harmful.

Children who live with smokers are more likely to get sick and have problems like ear infections and asthma.

Your baby is worth quitting for! South Country Health Alliance offers a smoking cessation program that provides support, see page 32 for the number.

! **After Birth:** Caffeine, alcohol, drugs, THC, and nicotine can be passed along in breast milk! The baby's brain is still developing and exposure to these elements could affect the brain development and your baby's overall health.

! **Pay Attention to the Foods You Eat.** Eating a healthy balance of foods is important. Some foods can cause you and your baby to get sick. Avoid eating raw meat, fish, oysters, and unheated deli meat. These foods can carry harmful bacteria. Choose pasteurized cheeses and meats.

! **Get Vaccinated.** Talk with your doctor about the vaccines recommended during and after pregnancy. Be sure to ask for your flu shot! You can get it as early as October or at any point in the flu season.



Dental Care During Pregnancy

- ☞ Tell your dentist you are pregnant. Dental visits are more important than ever when you are pregnant. The dentist can help spot potential problems before they become an issue.
- ☞ It is important to take good care of your teeth and gums while you are pregnant.
- ☞ Pregnancy causes hormonal changes that can increase your risk of developing gum disease. This can also affect the health of your baby.
- ☞ Brush your teeth at least 2 times a day using a soft bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
- ☞ Get a new toothbrush every 3 months.
- ☞ Floss your teeth every day to clean between your teeth where a toothbrush can't reach.
- ☞ Talk to your dentist if you have bleeding or swollen gums.



Dental Care for Your Baby

- ☞ You should clean your baby's gums before teeth come in. You can do this by gently rubbing a clean, damp washcloth along the gums.
- ☞ After your baby's teeth start coming in, clean teeth with a child-size toothbrush twice per day. For children under 3, use a smear of fluoride toothpaste, the size of a grain of rice.

- ✎ It is generally recommended that an infant be seen by a dentist by the age of 1, or within 6 months after the first tooth comes in.
- ✎ Keep bottles and sippy cups out of your baby's crib at bedtime. Milk, formula, and juice have sugar in them and the sugar bathes the child's teeth. Children who fall asleep while drinking from them are more likely to have gum problems and tooth decay. If the child must take a bottle to bed or nap, put only water in the bottle.

Fluoride Varnish

- ✎ A Fluoride Varnish Application (FVA) is a topical fluoride treatment that strengthens healthy tooth enamel and repairs or remineralizes weakened enamel.
- ✎ Beginning at the eruption of the first tooth, fluoride varnish is recommended up to four times per year.
- ✎ Fluoride varnish is applied to all surfaces of the teeth with a small brush and is as simple as putting fingernail polish on your nails.
- ✎ You can get fluoride varnish applied to your child's teeth at a dentist's office, a medical clinic, or at a public health agency.
- ✎ Check with your doctor during the infant well-care exam, as an FVA may be applied during the C&TC visit. See page 29 for more on infant well care visits.

If you or your child does not have a dentist, we can help you find one. Call the dental number on page 32 of this book, or on the back of your South Country ID card.

Prenatal Care

- ☞ Tell your county financial worker about your pregnancy. You will be eligible for additional medical benefits and services.
- ☞ Get regular checkups to ensure you and your baby are staying healthy.
- ☞ During a doctor visit talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions. Call your doctor or nurse if you think you are having a problem.
- ☞ Pay attention to your emotions. Mild mood swings are normal, but talk with your doctor if you feel down or are worried about changes in your mood.
- ☞ Ask your doctor about taking a prenatal vitamin to get enough calcium, folic acid, and iron. These nutrients are critical for your baby's healthy development. South Country covers the cost of prenatal vitamins when you have a prescription from your doctor.
- ☞ Check with your doctor before taking any prescription or over-the-counter medication while you are pregnant or nursing.
- ☞ Check with your doctor about how much weight you should gain. It's normal to gain 25 to 35 pounds during pregnancy.
- ☞ Keep wearing your seat belt while you are pregnant. Always wear both the lap and shoulder belt. Buckle the lap strap under your belly and over your hips. If you get in an accident the seat belt will help protect you and your baby.

☞ Schedule a postpartum appointment to see your doctor 6 weeks after your baby is born or per your doctor's recommendation. Your doctor will check your recovery at this visit and it will give you a chance to ask questions about your health, your baby's health, and to discuss birth control options.

 Did you know South Country offers rewards for visiting your doctor early in your pregnancy and after your baby is born? More information about the rewards program can be found online at www.mnscha.org or by calling member services.

Your Scheduled Prenatal and Postpartum Visits

Date: MM/DD/YY

What is Pre-term Labor?

Pre-term labor is going into labor before the baby is ready. This type of labor happens between the 20th and 37th week of pregnancy. The following symptoms can mean your baby could have trouble breathing, eating, staying warm, seeing, or hearing.

Contact your doctor if you have:

- ☞ Unusual vaginal discharge or bleeding
- ☞ Cramps that feel like your period
- ☞ Low, dull backache
- ☞ Contractions (tightening in your abdomen)
- ☞ Trickle or a sudden gush of vaginal fluid
- ☞ Sudden swelling or puffiness
- ☞ Pressure in your back, abdomen, pelvis, or thighs (like the baby is pushing against you)

Help with Transportation

It is important for you to attend all of your appointments and to take your baby in for checkups. Call South Country Member Services for details on how to get transportation to and from your medical appointments.

Remember to continue to wear your seat belt during your entire pregnancy.



United Way First Call for Help

Are you worried you won't have a bed or clothes for your baby? Are you without a job or a place to live? Do you need a support group? The United Way First Call for Help can help you.

Call United Way First Call for Help at the number printed on page 32 of this book. It's a confidential service that can direct you to various other resources in your community.

Pregnancy Calendar

The calendar that begins on the next page is intended to help you keep track of important events and milestones during your pregnancy. Simply start using the calendar at whatever point you are in your pregnancy, and don't forget to mark your due date at week 40!

Some creative uses for this calendar include:

- ☞ Noting questions you want to ask your doctor
- ☞ Marking your appointments, due date, and the baby's first kick!
- ☞ Tracking your body's changes
- ☞ Tracking your food and nutrition
- ☞ Tracking your exercise
- ☞ Tracking your weight changes
- ☞ Writing down your thoughts and feelings about being a mom



Week 5

Your baby is growing and beginning to take on a distinct shape. Eat a variety of healthy foods and take your vitamins! If you feel nauseous, try snacking on dry cereal, pretzels or crackers, or suck on sugar-free candy.

To Do

- Find a doctor to see during your pregnancy.

notes

Week 6

Baby's brain and nervous system are developing fast. The heart is beating, too. You may feel tired and have aches or pains as your body gets used to being pregnant. Want pickles? Its okay, food cravings are normal during pregnancy!

To Do

- If you own a cat, ask someone to take over cat litter duty. Litter boxes carry germs you should avoid.

notes

Week 7

The umbilical cord has formed, connecting you and your baby. It will carry important nutrients from you to your baby until after delivery. A thick mucus plug has developed over your cervix to protect your uterus.

To Do

- Take a nap. Getting extra sleep can help you feel better.

notes

Week 8

Baby's fingers and toes are forming! Getting regular prenatal care is very important for the health of you and your baby. Every month your doctor will check your body's changes, baby's growth, and answer your questions.

To Do

- Call your new doctor to schedule an appointment. Prepare to talk about your family's health history.*

notes

Week 9

Your baby is about the size of a grape but growing fast. Baby's head, arms, torso, and legs are in place. You may feel bloated and notice you are gaining weight. Feeling emotional? Mood swings are normal as your hormones change.

To Do

- Skip the caffeine to help reduce bloating. Try herbal tea instead!*

notes

Week 10

Even though you can't feel it quite yet, your baby is moving. All of baby's vital organs are working now, too. Remember that good nutrition is important. If you need help paying for groceries or want nutrition advice, call your local WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program.

To Do

- Use sunscreen to protect your sensitive skin*

notes

Week 11

Baby is now about two inches long and will continue growing fast. This means you are also gaining weight. Most women gain an average of 25 to 35 pounds during their pregnancies, but every woman gains weight at a different rate.

To Do

- Talk with your doctor about how much weight you should gain. Eat 200-300 extra calories/day.*

notes

Week 12

Baby's vocal chords are forming. You'll hear them in about 7 months! You may notice that your skin is changing. A mix of hormones and increased blood flow may leave your skin looking flushed, smooth, and discolored but radiant!

To Do

- To help reduce constipation, drink plenty of fluids and eat foods that are rich in fiber.*

notes

Week 13

Welcome to your second trimester! Baby is still growing fast and is about the size of a peach. It is typical to feel heartburn as the uterus grows and pushes up against your tummy.

To Do

- To help with the heartburn, avoid spicy foods or large meals.*

notes

Week 14

Baby is growing “lanugo,” a soft and colorless hair. It will shed naturally before baby is born. Your skin and muscles are starting to stretch to make more room for your baby.

To Do

- Don't forget to see your doctor this month.*

notes

Week 15

With an ultrasound, you can see baby's tiny blood vessels. They are working hard to circulate baby's blood. Don't be surprised if you find your emotions running wild or have a hard time concentrating. It's only temporary!

To Do

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day, and floss once every day.*

notes

Week 16

Baby's fingernails are well formed and may even need a trimming at birth. Around this week your doctor might do a blood test to see if your baby is at risk for any birth defects. Don't be alarmed – it's a routine test.

To Do

- Elevate your legs while resting to help ease the discomfort and appearance of bulging veins.*

notes

Week 17

Your breasts are changing! To prepare for baby, your breasts are getting ready to make milk. They may grow by 1 to 2 cup sizes and have a milky discharge. As for baby, the eyelashes, eyebrows, and head hairs are coming in.

To Do

- Find a bra that comfortably fits your changing figure.

notes

Week 18

This is an exciting time...baby can stretch, yawn, and make facial expressions! Your heart must work about twice as hard now to support your pregnancy. You might feel dizzy when standing up or moving around.

To Do

- Change positions slowly to avoid feeling dizzy.

notes

Week 19

A creamy white coating, called vernix caseosa, is forming to protect baby's skin. Around this time, you might notice baby moving inside your womb. It probably feels like butterflies in your stomach. No big kicks yet!

To Do

- Be sure you're drinking plenty of water every day. This will help with the dizziness too.

notes

Week 20

You are at the halfway point! Baby is now about 6 inches long and can hear what is happening outside the womb. Your breathing will become deeper and you may sweat more because of hormone changes. Try to stay cool.

To Do

- Take a walk to ease muscle aches and pains.*
- Sing, talk, and read to your baby.*

notes

Week 21

Baby is steadily gaining fat to stay warm. For you, exercise is important to make sure you are a healthy mom. It can help relieve stress and control weight. Walking, swimming, or yoga can make you feel good and boost your energy.

To Do

- Ask your doctor about exercising while pregnant.*

notes

Week 22

You may notice baby responds to sound. Baby can touch and feel now, too! Braxton Hicks contractions may occur when muscles in your uterus tighten. These contractions are not dangerous but call your doctor if they become more frequent or intense.

To Do

- Watch for signs of pre-term labor. Symptoms are listed on page 10.*

notes

Week 23

Baby weighs about 1 pound and kicks and punches harder now. You may be feeling many uncomfortable side effects of pregnancy these days, including more vaginal discharge. It should be clear or yellowish with a faint smell.

To Do

- Slather on lotion to sooth dry, itchy, stretching skin.*
- Take a warm bath to ease sore muscles.*

notes

Week 24

Baby is already about 8 inches long. Your doctor will probably do a test for gestational diabetes in the coming weeks. This kind of diabetes is only temporary but can cause problems. It is good to be screened just in case!

To Do

- Confirm your next doctor's visit.*
- Start thinking of a doctor for your baby. (see page 29)*

notes

Week 25

Talk...baby can recognize your voice! You can probably tell when baby is awake and asleep. Is your bottom sore? It's not uncommon to have hemorrhoids. These are dilated blood vessels in your rectum, and they can hurt.

To Do

- Use an ice pack or medicated wipe to ease hemorrhoids. Avoid laxatives and mineral oil.*

notes

Week 26

Baby now weighs about 2 pounds. You can expect to gain about 1 pound per week yourself. If you feel pain in your ribs, it is from baby growing and pushing up. This might cause some indigestion and heartburn, too.

To Do

- Make sure you are getting enough iron each day through foods and vitamins.*

notes

Week 27

Welcome to your third trimester! You are on the home stretch. Taking a childbirth or parenting class is a good way to prepare for baby's arrival and meet other moms-to-be. Ask the hospital or clinic about upcoming classes.

To Do

- Register for a childbirth class. SCHA will cover the costs! (see page 28)*

notes

Week 28

Baby is about 15 inches from head to toe. You might have more trips to the bathroom now as baby pushes on your bladder! Be sure to go, holding urine for too long can lead to kidney stones and other health problems. Leg cramps and swollen feet are common, too.

To Do

- Create a birthing plan. How do you picture your labor and delivery happening? Share your thoughts with your doctor.*

notes

Week 29

Baby keeps growing and has less space to move but can still jab mom! Your blood pressure might be higher than normal. This is okay but tell your doctor if you have trouble seeing or get bad headaches.

To Do

- Get a car seat. SCHA can help if you need one. (see pg. 26)*

notes

Week 30

Feel a rhythmic twitching in your belly? Baby must have hiccups! Baby is surrounded by special amniotic fluid, like bags of water. They usually do not break until labor starts. Call your doctor right away if your water breaks too soon.

To Do

-  *Start childproofing your home.*
- Maintain good posture to relieve body strain.*

notes

Week 31

Baby can now swallow! It's time to think about how to feed your newborn. Breast-feeding protects baby against health problems, is free, nutritious, and helps you and baby bond. And, it can also help you lose your pregnancy weight.

To Do

- Breast milk is best! If you need a breast pump SCHA will cover the costs. (see pg. 24)*

notes

Week 32

Baby is filling up almost all the space in your uterus. As baby's birth approaches, you might have questions about pain and pain relief during labor. Your doctor can talk with you about your options, including safe medications.

To Do

- Practice breathing exercises for when you're in labor.*
- Keep moving! Exercise is important.*

notes

Week 33

The next few weeks will include lots of growing for baby. About half of the pound you are gaining each week is going to baby. Your belly may look different from other pregnant women at this stage. Big or small, you are unique!

To Do

- Drink plenty of water to stay well hydrated and reduce side effects.*

notes

Week 34

Baby weighs about 5 pounds and might be in the head-down position for delivery. Baby might be moving less because of the tight fit. Your uterus is hardening and is pushed against your lower ribs. They may feel a bit sore!

To Do

- Stay rested. Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep every night.*

notes

Feeling anxious? If you have any questions about your pregnancy or any health concerns after baby is born, call the nurse advice line. Nurses are there 24 hours every day to help you.

Week 35

To Do

- Will you circumcise your baby if it's a boy? Do some research! (circumcision is **not** covered unless medically necessary).

notes

Week 36

You should be seeing your doctor weekly now. At each visit, the doctor may check your cervix. You may be feeling bursts of energy and fatigue, as well as more backaches and pelvis discomfort. Get plenty of rest and watch for signs of labor!

To Do

- Stock your freezer with foods that can be easily made after the baby comes home. Soups and casseroles work great!

notes

Week 37

Baby is getting more round and pink every day! Any time now you may lose the mucus plug that has protected your cervix. It will be a thick yellow discharge and may have a little blood. Tell your doctor when it comes out.

To Do

- Pack a hospital bag for you and the baby.
- Include a list of people to call when baby is born.

notes

Week 38

Baby's growth is slowing, but fat cells are still forming to keep baby warm. It's almost time! Nearly 95% of babies are born within 2 weeks of mom's due date. Know the signs of labor so you know when it's real.

To Do

- Remember - real labor pains become regular and stronger as time goes on.

notes

Week 39

Baby's umbilical cord is about 22 inches long and a half-inch thick. You are probably not getting any bigger but may still feel large and uncomfortable. Your center of gravity has shifted, so you might be feeling clumsy, too!

To Do

- Call your doctor when you think your water has broken. It might be a gush of water, or just a trickle.

notes

Week 40

According to your due date, baby should be appearing this week.

Don't worry if your due date comes and goes!

Many women deliver up to 2 weeks past their due date! While you wait, try and get plenty of rest to prepare your body for labor.

To Do

- Celebrate!
- After baby is born, make an appointment for a 6-week postpartum visit.

notes

Breast Feeding

Breast feeding is the best nutrition for your new baby. Your milk is made especially for your baby and it changes to fit the needs of your baby. Talk with your doctor or nurse about the benefits of breast feeding. If you need help or support, ask your doctor or public health nurse for a referral to a certified lactation consultant.

- ☞ Breast milk is easier for your baby to digest than formula, and no mixing, sterilizing, or heating is required.
- ☞ Breast feeding is a wonderful way for you to bond with your baby.
- ☞ Breast feeding helps your baby's brain development and helps your baby resist allergies, illness, and infections.
- ☞ Along with helping you lose that pregnancy weight faster, breast feeding your baby can help protect you from developing certain cancers later in life.
- ☞ Breast milk is free! You can save thousands of dollars each year by not having to buy formula.

The South Country Breast Pump Program:

If you must be away from your baby and would like an electric breast pump, South Country will provide one for you. To order a breast pump for home delivery, first ask your doctor for a prescription. Then call South Country Member Services for information on how to get one.

If you need breast feeding support or help using your breast pump, you can call WIC or your public health nurse. Phone numbers are found on page 32 of this book.



What if Baby Doesn't Get Enough Breast Milk?

Although most moms can provide their babies with all the milk they need, sometimes babies don't get enough. And when the problem isn't addressed, a baby can suffer from dehydration and failure to thrive, which are uncommon but serious problems.

Here are some signs to watch for **after** baby's first 5 days:

- ☞ Baby is wetting fewer than 6 diapers in a 24-hr period and/or has small, dark stools.
- ☞ Baby regularly falls asleep when put to your breast but then fusses when taken off.
- ☞ Baby doesn't seem satisfied even if feedings consistently take over an hour.
- ☞ Your breasts don't feel softer after nursing.
- ☞ Baby doesn't start gaining weight or starts losing weight.

If you're concerned that your baby isn't getting enough milk, call your baby's doctor or check in with a nurse or lactation consultant. At these appointments, you'll typically feed your baby while the consultant observes you and gives you valuable tips for breastfeeding success.

You may need to supplement baby's diet with formula, this is ok too. Do not feel ashamed, guilty, or embarrassed, it just means that your baby needs extra nutrition. It is not your fault.



The South Country Car Seat Program: Be Buckled™

South Country will provide a car seat to members in need, along with installation training, education, and safety tips. One seat will be provided per child, per lifetime. Call your county public health nurse to set up a time to receive your child's car seat. The number is on page 32.

Keep your child safe!

- ☞ Get a car seat before your baby is born so baby has a safe ride home from the hospital. Use a car seat every time your child is in the car.
- ☞ Infants under the age of 2 must ride in an approved car seat facing the back of the car.
- ☞ By law, all children under age 8 or shorter than 57 inches must be fastened safely in a car seat.
- ☞ Make sure the car seat is buckled in correctly with the seat belt or LATCH system.
- ☞ Follow the instructions carefully from the car seat manufacturer and your car owner's manual. Four out of five seats are used incorrectly. It's important to learn how to install and use your car seat correctly.
- ☞ Car seats can be unsafe and not work properly if they have been involved in an accident. Do not use a car seat that has been involved in an accident, or if you don't know the history of the car seat.
- ☞ Do not use a car seat that is more than 6 years old.

Picking a Car Seat

When it comes to selecting a car seat for your child, the “best” one is the one that you use correctly all the time and that fits your car. Here are some things to think about:

- 1. Read the box.** Make sure that you are getting a car seat that is appropriate for your child’s height, weight, and age. Check the label on the box or find the same information on the side of the car seat itself.
- 2. Know the law.** In most states including Minnesota, it is the law that infants ride rear-facing until age 2. Infants should remain rear facing as long as possible-until they are 2 years and older and have outgrown the weight for the car seat. Remember, it’s okay that a child’s feet touch the back of the automobile seat. It’s the child’s head and neck we want to protect.
- 3. Know the history.** Never use a car seat that you don’t know the history of, such as those from a garage sale, bought off the internet, or from a consignment shop. It may have been recalled, expired, or in an accident, and may not be safe! Car seats generally are only good for 6 years, so check for an expiration/manufacturing date.
- 4. Try it out.** Many stores will let you take the car seat out to your car to see if it fits. Play with the store’s model and see if it’s easy to use. It may have a cute pattern, but if it’s hard to use, you may regret your purchase. You can also check online for product reviews.

continued on next page



continued from previous page

- 5. Think ahead.** If your child grows out of the infant carrier seat, the next one to purchase is a “convertible seat”. These seats convert to forward-facing when the maximum rear-facing weight has been reached for that car seat.

Continued Learning

There are many classes available for you.

- ❧ **Pregnancy and childbirth education classes:** You can take pregnancy and childbirth classes in a clinic, hospital, or public health agency at no charge. Ask your local public health nurse about how to register.
- ❧ **Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes:** South Country members with children under the age of 5 can take part in most ECFE classes at no charge. Contact your local school district for class availability. If you are unsure which school district you live in, you can call the United Way First Call for Help at the number printed on page 32 of this book.
- ❧ **Community Education classes:** Community education offers fun classes. Brush up on a special skill or learn a new hobby. South Country members receive discounts on most Community Education classes (*up to five classes per calendar year*). You can contact your local school district or Community Education program for a class listing. For information on eligibility, call South Country Member Services at the number on page 32 of this book.



Finding a Doctor for your Baby

Select a primary care clinic for your baby. Choose a doctor for your baby before your baby is born. The first few years are important in your child's growth and development.

Child and Teen Checkups (Well-Care Checkups) help ensure your child is healthy and prevent your child from becoming sick.

At well-care checkups you can:

- ☞ Check on your child's growth and development
- ☞ Talk with your doctor about any questions you have about your child's health
- ☞ Talk with your doctor about safety in your home, about any signs of illness, and about your child's eating and sleeping habits
- ☞ Get all the recommended shots

Well-Care visits recommended at these ages:

<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 3-5 days	<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 9 months
<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 1 month	<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 12 months
<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 2 months	<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 15 months
<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 4 months	<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 18 months
<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 6 months	<u>MM/DD/YY</u> 24 months

Visits should be scheduled yearly after age 2.

Emotional Changes after Birth

The "Blues"

- ☞ Most women have mood swings after they have a baby. You may feel happy one minute and sad the next.
- ☞ You may feel a little depressed, have a hard time concentrating or sleeping, or may lose your appetite. You might worry that your life is out of control and that you are having a hard time coping with being a parent.
- ☞ The blues are a normal part of early motherhood and usually go away within 10 days of delivery.
- ☞ If your symptoms are severe or last longer than 14 days, talk to your doctor.

What might help...

- ☞ Talking to someone about how you are feeling.
- ☞ Finding someone who can help you with childcare, household chores, or errands. A social support network will help you find time for yourself, so you can rest.
- ☞ Taking time for yourself, even if it is only 15 minutes a day. Reading, exercising, or taking a bath might help.
- ☞ Talking with your doctor about how you feel. They can offer counseling or medications to help you.



Postpartum Depression

What you need to know

- ☞ Most of us feel sad, blue, unhappy, or miserable for short periods at one time or another. Depression is when feelings of sadness, anger, or frustration get in the way of everyday life and last for a long time.
- ☞ Depression that occurs within a year after having a baby is called postpartum depression. It is sometimes caused by changing hormones, or simply from stress over the changes at home. Symptoms often include sadness, lack of energy, trouble concentrating, anxiety, and feelings of guilt or worthlessness.
- ☞ If you have felt these symptoms for more than 2 weeks, you might have postpartum depression. Don't feel ashamed, guilty, or embarrassed. Many women experience this type of depression. It doesn't mean you're a bad mom. You may just need a little help to feel better.

What to do

- ☞ Call your doctor. Talk to your partner, a friend, or a relative. Tell them how you feel. Remember, it is okay to ask for help.

Treatment options

- ☞ Ask your doctor for a referral to a social worker or psychologist. Talking with a professional can help. Some depression medications are safe to take while breast feeding. Talk with your doctor about the best options.
- ☞ Join a support group with other women who suffer from depression.



Resources & Numbers

South Country Health Alliance Member Services

For information on your health programs, benefits, scheduling transportation, or finding a provider.

Toll Free:..... 866-567-7242

TTY Users: 800-627-3529 or 711

Or visit our website: www.mnscha.org

EXprogram Tobacco Cessation

For help to stop smoking 833-392-6224

Delta Dental

For help finding a dentist 800-774-9049

United Way First Call for Help

For help finding other community resources 800-543-7709

WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program

For support buying groceries and breast feeding 800-WIC-4030

County Public Health Nurse

Brown County 507-233-6820

Dodge County 507-635-6150

Freeborn County 507-377-5100

Goodhue County 651-385-3200

Kanabec County 320-679-6330

Sibley County 507-237-4035

Steele County 507-444-7650

Wabasha County 651-565-5200

Waseca County 507-835-0685

South Country Health Alliance Member Services

1-866-567-7242, TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

Attention: If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

- Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este document, llame al número indicado arriba.
- Digniin. Haddii aad u baahantahay caawimaad lacag-la'ann ah ee tarjumaadda (afcelinta) qorallkan, lambarka kore wac.
- Thov ua twb zoo nyeem. Yog hais tias koj xav tau kev pab txhais lus rau tsab ntaub ntawv no pub dawb, ces hu rau tus najnpawb xov tooj saum toj no.



1-866-567-7242, TTY 711

members@mnscha.org

Discrimination is against the law. South Country Health Alliance does not discriminate because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sexual orientation, public assistance status, marital status, age, disability or sex.

#5567



Scan QR code with your smartphone to access to additional content.





South 
Country
HEALTH ALLIANCE

www.mnscha.org