



New Baby, New LifeSM

Pregnancy and Beyond

Resource Guide



Support at each stage of pregnancy and delivery

A healthy pregnancy is a team effort. You took an important step to make informed decisions about your health care by joining Empire BlueCross HealthPlus. While you are on your pregnancy journey, this guide can teach you about plan benefits and resources to support your well-being. You are not going through this alone. We are ready to answer any questions you may have along the way. You can call our Member Services team or 24/7 NurseLine at any time, day or night.

Here are a few steps to take as you prepare to welcome your baby into the world:



✓ To stay healthy in your pregnancy, set up a visit with your OB provider

An obstetrical provider (OB) is a medical expert in pregnancy care. You will see this provider for prenatal visits during your pregnancy and after you give birth. When you visit your OB, they'll work with you to determine your health risks. Your OB will help you set up the appointments you need to monitor you and your baby throughout pregnancy.

During your visits, your OB can answer your questions about pregnancy and delivery, including topics such as:

- Foods to eat or avoid
- Safe exercises
- Medicines
- Birth options
- Mood changes
- Feeding
- Family planning

✓ To keep your benefits, tell the NY State of Health you're pregnant

Please call the NY State of Health at 855-355-5777 (TTY 800-662-1220) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eastern time to report your pregnancy.

After your baby is born, call Quality Management (QM) Member Experience at **888-743-3508** to complete a Delivery Confirmation Screening. You should also receive a subscriber ID number for your newborn. If you do not receive your newborn ID or Medicaid card, please call the QM team at **888-743-3508** for help.

What questions do you have for your OB?

You can write them below to take with you to your next visit:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

You can use the **Find a Doctor** tool on our website to find an OB near you.





Healthy Rewards

You can earn rewards for going to your health visits! You can redeem your Healthy Rewards with gift cards from a list of stores on your Benefit Reward Hub. To join the Healthy Rewards program, visit your benefits page at empireblue.com/ny.



From here, you can log in to your Benefit Reward Hub and visit the Healthy Rewards portal. You also can call 888-990-8681 (TTY 711), Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time.

If you have both Medicare and Medicaid (dual benefits), you may not qualify for Healthy Rewards. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has rules for dual benefits. Please call Member Services to find out which benefits apply to you.

My Advocate®

My Advocate is a health program that makes your care personal. The program starts with a health screener meant to help us find out more about you. The answers you give during the screener inform us of how to provide you with the best level of support based on your health needs. You may participate in My Advocate by phone, through the smartphone app, or on the web.

There are also tools in the app and website to help you:

- Track your baby's growth.
- Count the kicks in your pregnancy.
- Prepare for your baby's birth with checklists.

You can choose how you want to receive updates: by mobile app, website, or weekly calls from MaryBeth, your virtual pregnancy coach.

To join My Advocate, download My Advocate in your app store or create an account at myadvocatehelps.com.



When you join My Advocate, you'll receive a screening call from MaryBeth, your virtual pregnancy coach. She will ask questions about your health and pregnancy to see if you could benefit from case management. If you want a referral for case management, please call Member Services to ask for one.

The Pregnancy Survey is another tool you can complete to tell us about your specific health needs. Your answers can lead to an extra layer of support in your pregnancy. We will put your answers in your private health record. Only staff helping with your care will see them. If you have not completed this form, please call 888-743-3508.



Healthy pregnancy and safe delivery

Your choices throughout pregnancy can lead to a healthy pregnancy and safe delivery of your baby. You can be confident knowing your wellness team is here for you.

During visits with your OB, they will help you prepare for your baby's birth. Together, you can make a birth plan, talk through your questions, and find ways to help you gain peace of mind about your care.

Our 24/7 NurseLine is ready 24/7 to answer any health questions, even when your OB's office is closed. When your doctor is not available, you also can use LiveHealth Online to see a doctor on your smartphone, tablet, or computer.



Extra support

You can receive one-on-one support with a nurse who learns about your personal health needs and pregnancy through our case management program. Your OB case manager can help you set up health visits, find community resources, and partner with you to make informed decisions before and after you deliver.

Helpful resources:

- **Health A to Z:** Are you looking to learn about pregnancy and health topics? Search for your health topic in Health A to Z at empireblue.com/ny.
- **Show your love!:** This app has steps to keep you and your baby healthy. Download Show your love! in your app store today.



With My Advocate, MaryBeth makes it easy to connect with your case manager. She will let your case manager know right away if you have any questions or concerns. Your case manager will follow up with you.



Substance use and pregnancy

There is no safe amount of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs to use when you are pregnant. Your OB's priority is to make sure both you and your baby are healthy. We encourage you to talk openly with your OB about the substances you are taking. They can work with you to make a safe plan to stop using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs that can harm you and your baby.



Helpful resources:

- **National Smoking Quitline:** This toll-free number is run by the National Cancer Institute. It connects you to services to help you quit smoking or quit using other tobacco products. Call 24/7 at **800-784-8669 (TTY 711)**.
- **Smokefree.gov:** Support, tips, tools, and expert advice to help quit smoking.
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) National Helpline:** This free helpline offers treatment referral for people facing mental health or substance use problems. You can call SAMHSA 24/7 at **800-662-4357 (TTY 711)**.

It is helpful to find a doctor (pediatrician) you trust for your baby before you deliver. You can use the **Find a Doctor** tool on the Empire website to search for one.



Your birth plan

A birth plan helps make sure your choices are respected during labor and delivery. Your birth plan describes what you want to the doctor and nurses who help deliver your baby. It can include the types of medicine you do or do not want to take, who you want to be in the room with you when you have your baby, and any religious or cultural practices you follow.



Making a birth plan can help you feel better prepared for labor and delivery.

Below are questions to answer to start your birth plan:

Where do you want to have your baby?



Do you want skin-to-skin contact with your baby within an hour of birth (recommended)?

Who do you want in the room with you during labor and delivery?

Are there any traditions you want for your baby's birth?

Who do you want to cut the umbilical cord?

For a sample birth plan, go to marchofdimess.org, go to *Health Topics*, and visit the *Labor and Delivery* section.



Caring for yourself and your baby

In your follow-up visit with your OB after your baby's birth, they will make sure your body is healing and help you adjust to life with a newborn. **It's best to see them within 1 to 3 weeks, but no later than 12 weeks after delivery.** Your provider may want to see you sooner than three weeks if you had a high-risk pregnancy or delivered by C-section.



You can earn **Healthy Rewards** for going to this postpartum visit!

If your Medicaid coverage will end after your baby's birth, plan your postpartum visit **before** you lose coverage. You can call the NY State of Health at 855-355-5777 (TTY 800-662-1220).



With **My Advocate**, you can receive tips from MaryBeth or online to help you with self-care, recovery, stress management, and support with parenting.



Well-baby care

Your baby's PCP can provide the best care by working closely with you. For the first year of life, the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests your baby have a checkup at birth, 3 to 5 days old, and at 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24, and 30 months old.¹

You may earn Healthy Rewards for taking your baby to their health visits! Log in to your Benefit Reward Hub at empireblue.com/ny or call 888-990-8681 (TTY 711) to see if you qualify.

With My Advocate,
MaryBeth will teach
you about vaccines
(shots) and your baby's
well-child visits.



Helpful resources:

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** You can track child development at cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html.
- **March of Dimes:** Read about the latest research and topics to keep you and your baby healthy at marchofdimes.org.
- **CDC Milestone tracker:** Track your baby's milestones from age 2 months to 5 years. Download the CDC Milestone tracker in your app store today.

1 American Academy of Pediatrics website, *Recommendations of Preventative Pediatric Health Care* (accessed September 2020): downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is a healthy decision to make for your baby's growth and development. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that babies are only breastfed for at least the first six months of their lives, unless you have a medical reason not to breastfeed.

Helpful resources:

- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC):** WIC provides community support for breastfeeding. Learn how to apply in the Community Resources section of this guide.
- **La Leche League International:** This program provides mother-to-mother breastfeeding support, encouragement, and education. To find your local league, visit llli.org.
- **Infant Risk Center:** Find answers to your questions about breastfeeding and medicines. Call **806-352-2519 (TTY 711)** or visit infantrisk.com.

Neonatal intensive care unit

The neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) is a unit in the hospital for babies who need special care after birth. If your baby is premature at birth or you had a high-risk pregnancy, your baby may need to stay in the NICU. A team of trained providers will work with your baby to help them fully recover.

You can trust your case manager in our NICU Case Management program to support you while your baby is in the NICU. We are committed to making sure all of our high-risk infants have a detailed plan for care in the NICU and a safe transition home. If you have any questions about the NICU Case Management program, please call Member Services for help.

Helpful resources:

- **Graham's Foundation:** Provides support, advocacy, and research for preemies and their families. Visit grahamsfoundation.org.
- **My NICU Baby:** Created with the March of Dimes to provide answers, tools, and support for families of a NICU baby.

**Empire may cover
the cost of a breast pump.**



**Please call Member Services to ask how
you can receive a breast pump.**



Call 911 right away if you feel like hurting yourself or your baby.

You also can call the Behavioral Health Crisis Line at 800-300-8181 (TTY 711) 24/7.



Postpartum depression

Postpartum depression (PPD) is common and treatable.

According to the CDC, about 1 in 8 women experience symptoms of postpartum depression.²

You may be experiencing PPD if you:

- Feel anxious or depressed most of the day every day.
- Have trouble bonding with your baby.
- Do not feel better two weeks after giving birth.

By asking for help, you are taking the first step to heal. Your doctor can make a support plan for you if you are willing to share how you feel. Your emotional well-being is just as important as your physical health.

Helpful resources:

- **Postpartum Support International:** Visit postpartum.net or call **800-944-4773 (TTY 711)** 24/7 and follow the prompts to be connected with someone.
- **What to Expect:** Visit whattoexpect.com and search “postpartum depression.”

With My Advocate, you can receive tips from MaryBeth or online to help you cope with mood changes.



² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, *Depression During and After Pregnancy* (accessed September 2020): cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/maternal-depression/index.html.

Family planning

If you want to have another baby, you should talk to your doctor before you try to become pregnant again. Having a pregnancy too soon after you give birth may cause your next pregnancy to be high-risk for an early delivery or preterm birth. It's best to wait at least 18 months between pregnancies. Your body needs proper time to heal and recover.³

Until you are ready for another pregnancy, you can choose from many birth control options. The long-acting reversible birth control (LARC) is one method to avoid pregnancy. LARC is a device that your doctor places inside your arm or uterus. It stays in place until you want it taken out. Talk with your doctor about the best options for you and how they may affect your body. 24/7 NurseLine can answer any questions you have about the method you choose. You should call Member Services to ask about your benefits for birth control.

If you have any health conditions or take any medicines, you should also talk to your doctor about how they can affect your next pregnancy. They may suggest you take a prenatal vitamin with folic acid before you become pregnant to protect your baby's health.⁴

You can read about family planning at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) by searching “preconception.” You also can search “contraception” for birth control methods.



³ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists website, *Interpregnancy Care* (accessed September 2020): [acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/obstetric-care-consensus/articles/2019/01/interpregnancy-care](https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/obstetric-care-consensus/articles/2019/01/interpregnancy-care).

⁴ March of Dimes website, *Folic Acid* (accessed September 2020): [marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/folic-acid.aspx](https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/folic-acid.aspx).

Helpful resources:

- **Office on Women's Health:** You can visit the website at [womenshealth.gov](https://www.womenshealth.gov) or call 800-994-9662 (TDD 888-220-5446) with questions about health topics or their special programs.
- **Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) devices:** You can read more about IUDs and implants at [whoopsproof.org](https://www.whoopsproof.org).

With My Advocate, you can receive tips from MaryBeth or online to help you with family planning and birth control options.





Health coverage for you and your baby

Our goal is to keep you and your baby healthy. You can make sure your baby keeps their health coverage by telling NY State of Health about your pregnancy before and after you deliver. You can reach NY State of Health at **855-355-5777 (TTY 800-662-1220)** Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eastern time.

After your baby is born, please call Quality Management (QM) Member Experience at **888-743-3508** to complete the Delivery Confirmation Screening. You should also receive a subscriber ID number for your newborn. If you do not receive your newborn ID or Medicaid card, please call the QM team at **888-743-3508**. They will help speed up the process to enroll your baby in the health plan and can assist with any questions.



You want to make sure you stay enrolled as well every year. You

will receive a letter in the mail about 90 days before your renewal date. The letter will tell you how to renew your benefits.

You can call us with any questions at 800-809-8009 (TTY 711). We're happy to help!



Community resources

Do you need help paying bills or finding food or housing? We partner with local organizations to help you find resources for assistance. When you type in your ZIP code at empireblue.auntbertha.com, you can find local organizations near you.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC is a program that provides many resources to families with children. You can receive food vouchers, health education, and peer counseling for moral support in parenting.

To read about the program and find out if you qualify:

1. Visit fns.usda.gov/wic.
2. Go to *How to Apply*.
3. Search for your state's toll-free number or visit nystateofhealth.ny.gov.

Baby safety showers

Your child's safety is a priority even before they arrive. During your pregnancy, you can attend monthly baby safety showers in different boroughs with health topics and giveaways while supplies last. You'll have a chance to win raffles of various baby items. If you have questions about the baby safety showers or need help with informing the Human Resources Administration of your pregnancy, please call Quality Management (QM) Member Experience at **888-743-3508 (TTY 711)** Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Eastern time.

CenteringPregnancy™

There's a new way to receive prenatal care. It's called CenteringPregnancy. It allows a group setting with other parents for discussion with your OB and nurse. With CenteringPregnancy:

- You can go to your prenatal visits with other parents who are at the same or similar time in their pregnancies.
- You meet as a group and share with each other to learn about pregnancy.
- You have 10 prenatal visits that last up to two hours long and includes private time with your OB.

Call 24/7 NurseLine to find out if there is a CenteringPregnancy site close to you.

Nurse-Family Partnership — Helping First-Time Parents Succeed®

Are you a first-time parent in your first or second stage of pregnancy (trimester)? If yes, Nurse-Family Partnership may be a great resource for you. A nurse will come to your home to offer support throughout your pregnancy and until your baby is 2 years old. To read about the program or see if there is a site near you, visit: nursefamilypartnership.org.

Healthy Families America (HFA)

This program provides home visit services and community support referrals for your family. You can receive help with support groups, prenatal and postpartum care, child development, and family goal planning. To find an HFA site near you, visit healthyfamiliesamerica.org or call 312-663-3520.

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Thank you

for trusting Empire
with your health care.

A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt and maroon pants, sitting on a couch and holding a baby up in the air. The baby is wearing a patterned onesie and dark pants. The woman is smiling and looking up at the baby. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting.

- CDC website: *Breastfeeding* (July 2020): <https://cdc.gov/breastfeeding/index.htm>
- March of Dimes website: *Why at least 39 weeks is best for your baby* (July 2020): <https://marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/why-at-least-39-weeks-is-best-for-your-baby.aspx>
- American Academy of Pediatrics. [Healthychildren.org](https://healthychildren.org): *Depression and Anxiety During Pregnancy and After Birth: FAQs* (Accessed September 2020): <https://healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/Depression-and-Anxiety-During-Pregnancy-and-After-Birth-FAQs.aspx>
- Mayo Clinic website: *Family planning: Get the facts about pregnancy spacing* (February 5, 2020): <https://mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/getting-pregnant/in-depth/family-planning/art-20044072>
- Office on Women's Health website: *Prenatal care and tests* (January 2019): bit.ly/2KdrNbP.
- ACOG Long-Acting Reversible Contraception Program: bit.ly/2mdwcEP.

Member Services and 24/7 NurseLine:
800-300-8181 (TTY 711)
[empireblue.com/ny](https://www.empireblue.com/ny)



The information in this document is for educational purposes only. It is not to be used as medical advice.

Empire BlueCross HealthPlus complies with Federal civil rights laws. Empire does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 800-300-8181 (TTY 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 800-300-8181 (TTY 711).

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