

BabyBumps

How can I help my friends and family prepare for a new baby?

Becoming a parent for the first time is exciting, joyful—and overwhelming. Helping your loved one prepare for the baby's birth will make the transition to parenthood easier, and can help get the new family started on the right foot for a lifetime of health and happiness.



SHARE INFORMATION ON CLASSES

One of the most beneficial things new parents can do prior to the birth of their new baby is to attend a class to help them prepare for delivery, breastfeeding, infant safety and child/baby cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Many of these classes are offered through your local hospital. Here is a list of classes that may be helpful to new parents:

Birth classes. These classes give instruction on what to expect during the labor and delivery process and help both parents prepare for their arrival of their new baby. Most hospitals also offer tours of the hospital labor and delivery areas and offer parents the opportunity to ask questions of hospital staff and healthcare providers and meet other expecting parents. Knowing where to go and what to expect before the big day can eliminate a lot of last-minute stress so they can focus on what's important: having a healthy baby.

Infant Safety Classes. This safety class is designed for new and expectant parents and their caregivers. Topics include infant development, baby safety, injury prevention and immediate care of common injuries for infants.

Child & Baby CPR. While you hope you'll never use CPR for a child or infant, it's essential to know the steps to help in case of a cardiac or breathing emergency. These classes are often held through your local hospital or your local American Red Cross.

Breastfeeding. Like anything new, nursing a new baby takes practice and knowledge to get it right. Pregnant moms who learn about breastfeeding through classes are more likely to have success. Reach out to your local hospital to find a breastfeeding class in your area.

Baby-Proofing the Home

One of the most important ways you can help a new family feel prepared and ready for their new arrival is help them make sure their home is safe and secure. Here are some tips on making sure the baby's new environment is ready:

- Check the safety of the crib and other baby items. While we all appreciate hand-me-downs from family and friends, it's critical to know if these items are safe and whether they have been recalled. To learn whether the baby's crib and mattress is safe, contact the U.S. Consumer Product Information Safety Commission, at www.cpsc.gov or call them at 800-638-2772.
- Prevent suffocation by removing all pillows, blankets and stuffed animals from the crib.
- Make sure handrails are installed and secure in stairways and always hold the handrail when using stairs while holding the baby.
- Check to see that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in the baby's home are working.

- Make sure there are emergency numbers, including poison control, near each phone.
- Verify that the home or apartment number is easy to view so fire or rescue can locate the home easily.



Choosing a Healthcare Provider for the New Addition

- Most pregnant women give birth in the hospital where their doctor practices and where they are close to family, friends and medical care (just in case). The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends hospitals and accredited birth centers as the safest settings for delivering babies. Many hospitals now offer a comfortable, "homey" birthing experience with the peace of mind of nearby medical care.
- Confirm that your loved one's insurance covers both their healthcare provider and the hospital or birthing center they choose.

Choosing the Birthing Experience

Now is a good time to think about the type of birth your loved ones would like to have. Here are some conversation starters to help them think about their preferences:

- Who do you want in the delivery room with you?
- Do you want medications to keep you comfortable during labor?
- Do you want to breastfeed your baby?
- If you have a boy, do you want to circumcise him?
- What else is important to you?

ACTION ITEMS

Need a doctor? Let our Physician Referral Service help you find a primary care physician or specialist in our network of care. Visit doctors.stlukes-stl.com or call **314-205-6060**.

