



Taking care of
Mom & Baby

Pediatrician. Mom.
Resource for you.



@babydocmama

5 TIPS TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR MOTHERHOOD

*Congratulations,
Mama!*

I know you've already spent so much time preparing for the birth of your new baby. Perhaps you've even taken a birthing course.

By now you might be tired of looking through all the baby gadget options. Perhaps you created a list - your best guess of what your baby will need. Or maybe you've already been showered with all kinds of gifts for the baby.

As a pediatrician and a mom, I know it's incredibly **overwhelming!** There's so much out there.

And how are you supposed to anticipate the needs of someone you haven't even met yet, anyway?!?!?!?

The fourth trimester is the 3 months immediately following the birth of your baby

You're becoming a mother. Your new baby is adjusting to life outside the womb.

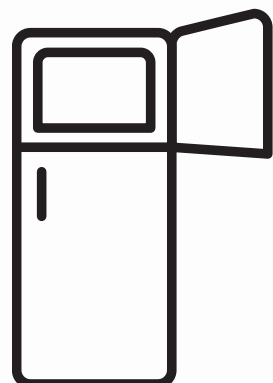
I'm not here to tell you more things to buy. Instead, I want to share my **5 tips of things you can do NOW** - in your third trimester - to make your life smoother in the fourth trimester. There will be a lot of change for both you and your baby. It's an amazing, special time that I want you to enjoy!

But you've never done it before. Or maybe you have. Either way, grab a pen and paper. Or not. Just read and take mental notes. That's ok too. I promise that thinking about and planning for these few things now will go a loooooooooooooong way to make your life easier when your little one finally arrives.



#1: Food Preparation

- If you cook, take this time to cook a little extra at each meal and put it in the freezer. You will thank me later! It will be amazing, especially in those first few weeks home, to have a stash of ready to go meals.
- If you order groceries online, set up your account with your go-to items easy to access. If you haven't used online grocery delivery, consider trying it out now!
- Have plenty of snacks available. Think easy to grab and eat with one hand. Trust me, this is necessary. You will spend lots of time with a baby in your arms and you will learn to do many things one handed that you didn't think were possible.
- Similarly, consider getting some straws. It makes it easier to drink one handed. And stock up on paper plates so you have less dirty dishes to deal with.





#2: Have an honest conversation with your partner, or a another loved one who will be your support.

It's so helpful to be on the same page. But if you're not, it's also better to know now, talk about it and come up with a plan.

Here are a few things I strongly suggest you discuss before the baby comes:

- Visitors - At the birth, at the hospital afterwards and at home. Think about who will be helpful to you and who you feel comfortable being around in your most vulnerable state. If there are people who want to visit but you don't feel comfortable having around in the beginning, please say that. Talk about it. And come up with a way to address it. See # 5 for some other suggestions about how they can be helpful.
- Have a plan for when visitors come. New mama, you need to focus on recovering from birth and feeding your baby! Your partner can make sure visitors wash their hands when coming in, and that feeding the baby is the priority in the house. He/she can kick people out if it's time to feed and you need some privacy and comfort.



#2: ...continued

- Have a mental health check in plan. This is so important. Even if you don't think you'll need it. It's for everyone. Talk to your partner about ways you can check in on each other daily. To know how you're REALLY doing.
- Talk about expectations.
 - Do you plan to split everything 50/50? Or some other way? Think about things like feeding the baby in the middle of the night, changing diapers, laundry and all the other household chores.
 - Are there certain responsibilities you expect each other to take care of?
 - Talking about this now can save a lot of resentment later on.
 - If you're upset that your partner didn't take care of something you expected him/her to do, but he/she didn't know about that expectation...then no one wins.





#2: ...continued

- Talk about allowing each other to take 10 min each day alone. Or more. A little can go a long way here. Talk about things you can do together when given the opportunity that you both enjoy and that will allow you to connect - like taking a walk, listening to music, playing a game.
- Talk to your partner about identifying early signs of anxiety, depression, or overwhelm. For example: getting easily irritated, inability to sleep when you have the opportunity, inability to find joy in things.
- If you have a history of anxiety or depression, reach out to your mental health provider now and let them know you're expecting, just in case you need to touch base later.





#3: Don't worry about all those baby gadgets

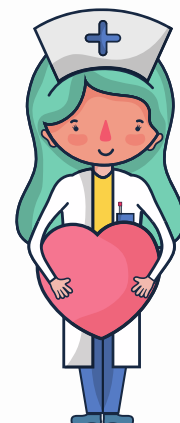
- Try not to feel overwhelmed with all the stuff that's available. Honestly, you can probably do without most of it anyway.
- Here are what I consider the essentials:
 - Plenty of diapers - some in size newborn and many boxes in size 1 (babies quickly move on to the next size, and you'll certainly use them)!
 - Diaper wipes
 - A place to change diapers (station or changing pads)
 - Petroleum and zinc oxide ointments for rashes
 - Some onesies and sleep swaddles
 - A safe place to sleep
 - Feeding supplies (bottles, nursing stuff)
 - Car seat
 - Baby carrier
 - Stroller
 - Grooming supplies - nail file, soap
 - Pacifiers
 - A rectal thermometer (just in case you need it). It's the only accurate way to take a newborn's temperature.





#4: Make the most of your hospital stay

- Ask the nurses for help, they're amazing and so knowledgeable!
 - Ask about feeding your baby, changing a diaper... whatever questions you have!
- Take home as many supplies as you can!
 - For yourself, grab the peri bottle (ask the nurse if you don't which one this is...it's a squirt bottle for rinsing) and lots of pads.
 - For the baby, grab diapers, cloths and whatever else is there!





#5: Think about things you can outsource.

Either hired help or help from well meaning family and friends who will be asking over and over again if you need anything.

Have a solid plan of what to tell them. I suggest actually making a list and hanging it on your refrigerator - somewhere that is visible to you and anyone else who is around!

Here's some suggestions:



- Clean
- Meal prep - cut veggies, etc
- Empty dishwasher
- Fold laundry
- A list of your favorite take out/delivery restaurants... and perhaps even your usual orders highlighted or written on the side 😊
- A link to an up-to-date list of things you need (eg: Amazon, Instacart)
- A link to a meal train sign up ... or instructions for creating one!
- Occupy toddler (if applicable)



BONUS!!

If you plan on breastfeeding, this is for you.

I think that breastfeeding is a bit like swimming. Hear me out! You can read up about it, but until you actually jump in the water, you're not going to actually figure it out. And that's ok. So read up, Mama, I think that's great. But please don't let all the info overwhelm you!

Every mother is different. Every baby is different. That's true with regards to anatomy and physiology and temperament and so much more. So it's only natural that every mother-baby dyad has a unique set of needs or challenges they face. You don't have a crystal ball and that's ok.

But here are a few things you can do now to set yourself up for success.

- Find a lactation consultant. In case you need one, it's best to do the research now and have someone on hand for when you may need her.
- Have a breastfeeding pillow, it helps especially in the beginning.
- Have comfortable, loose clothes. A nursing bra. A robe is also helpful (if you're a robe person).
- Nipple cream
- A pump. And set it up now if you can. It seems like a daunting task to learn how to use that thing. But it's so much better if you do that now instead of when you're trying to feed a baby.



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I hope you found this checklist helpful!

I would LOVE to go on this journey with you!

Follow me to learn more tips & tricks for when
the baby arrives.

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[traceymd.com](https://www.traceymd.com)

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrCFCaKwGAbMm61ELwARTbQ>

We've got this, Mama!

