

for wellness. for women.



Special delivery:

Starting a healthy family

kp.org

A TEAM APPROACH TO CARE DURING YOUR PREGNANCY

And should you need it, all of our labor and delivery units have a dedicated team of specialists that are available 24 hours a day to assist with your baby's birth. Many of our hospitals are also equipped with neonatal intensive care units, which specialize in caring for babies born prematurely or with other high-risk problems.

We're here to deliver the kind of care that truly provides a healthy beginning to your growing family. And I'm proud to be a member of your prenatal care team.



Having a baby is one of the most special moments in life. If you decide to take that step toward becoming a mom, you can feel confident knowing that you'll receive high-quality care from Kaiser Permanente throughout your pregnancy.

In addition to our physicians, your prenatal care team often includes nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, lactation consultants, and health educators. Together, they care for you from the day you find out you're pregnant to the day of your baby's birth and beyond. Your team is just part of more than 14 labor and delivery units and more than 70 medical offices throughout Northern California. This means that whether you're at home, at work, or traveling within Northern California, you'll have access to one of our many medical facilities. And we're building new facilities throughout California to better meet your needs every day.

The care you receive is also supported behind the scenes by dedicated researchers looking at ways to ensure healthy pregnancies. We have one of the largest, non-university medical research programs in the United States. Our research has contributed to understanding and preventing conditions such as preterm labor, gestational diabetes, and miscarriage.



Tracy Flanagan, MD
Director
Northern California
Women's Health Services



Pregnancy programs and services



Have a healthy pregnancy

Healthy Beginnings

Our informative *Healthy Beginnings* newsletters focus on key pregnancy milestones that have the most impact on your and your baby's health. Expecting mothers receive an issue at each prenatal appointment, and can also sign up online for weekly e-newsletters tailored to the baby's due date. Click on "Healthy Beginnings Pregnancy e-Newsletter" on your Ob/Gyn's home page to subscribe.

Prenatal screenings

With 250 full-time geneticists, genetic counselors, and lab technicians on staff in Northern California, Kaiser Permanente's prenatal genetic screening and counseling program is growing to keep pace with the latest scientific advances. As more genes are identified, more screening tests—such as those for cystic fibrosis—are becoming available.

Special needs

Because not all pregnancies are the same, we offer specialized prenatal resources focused on your specific needs.

- The Perinatal Service Center provides services by phone, 24/7, for women at risk for early delivery, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- If you need help to stop using tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, our Early Start Program can help.
- The Family Violence Prevention Program offers support to women experiencing domestic violence.

Delivery

Our medical centers with labor and delivery teams have a pediatrician, obstetrician, and anesthesiologist on site 24 hours a day. You'll never have to worry about an obstetrician being paged from home—the team is ready when you are. And we're committed to respecting the preferences for childbirth you've specified in your birth plan, while ensuring you have a healthy and safe birth experience.

Midwives

If you prefer to have a certified nurse-midwife deliver your baby, we can help. Most of our hospitals have nurse-midwives on staff, ready to manage your labor under the supervision of a physician. Our midwives focus on wellness and teaching women to understand and trust their bodies. Their centuries-old tradition of assisting women in childbirth is combined with advanced medical techniques.

Neonatal intensive care units (NICUs)

NICUs are staffed by board-certified neonatologists, who can also call on pediatric specialists in surgery, gastroenterology, endocrinology, ophthalmology, and other specialties as needed to ensure your baby has the best care possible.

Breastfeeding education and support

Studies show that babies who are fed breast milk have fewer colds, allergies, and infections. Breastfeeding also helps decrease your baby's risk of pneumonia, diabetes, and other serious diseases. And it helps mothers with weight loss after pregnancy, and can help reduce the risk of osteoporosis and certain types of cancer. All of our hospitals have lactation consultants and nurse practitioners to help you and your newborn get a healthy start with breastfeeding. Breastfeeding advice, classes, and supplies are also available.

Healthy living resources

Take advantage of a variety of classes and videos to learn about diet and exercise during pregnancy, preparing for childbirth, breastfeeding, newborn care, and more. Some classes may require a fee.

- Contact your local Health Education Center for more information, or visit kp.org/classes to search for a class near you.
- Visit your practitioner's home page at kp.org/mydoctor to view videos, download podcasts, subscribe to the online *Healthy Beginnings* newsletter, and to view Preparing for Your Procedure or Childbirth interactive online programs.

Healthy pregnancies begin well before conception. If you're considering becoming pregnant, it's important to aim for a healthy lifestyle *before* you try to conceive.

- **Alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes.** Smoking during pregnancy increases the chances of your baby being born underdeveloped and having ongoing health problems. Drug and alcohol use during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects. Use the time before you become pregnant to stop smoking and using drugs and alcohol.
- **Exercise.** It's important to exercise and be at a healthy weight before you get pregnant. Try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day on most days. Before starting any exercise program, check with your physician.
- **Prescription medications.** If you take any prescription medications, talk with your physician before you get pregnant.
- **Folic acid.** Taking a daily multivitamin that contains at least 0.4 mg of folic acid can help reduce the risk of birth defects. Take the multivitamin before conceiving and until you're at least six weeks into your pregnancy.



Contact your Women's Health (Ob/Gyn) Department as soon as you think you're pregnant. Once you know you're pregnant, we'll let you know when you need to come in for your prenatal care visits. Coming to all your prenatal care visits will help make sure your pregnancy is going well.

To learn more about pregnancy, visit kp.org/pregnancy.