

Preparing for the Hospital

After choosing your hospital at the end of the second trimester, make a practice trip to the hospital at some time before actually going into labor. A practice trip lets you get to know the correct roads and how long the drive takes. Many hospitals will give you a tour of their labor and delivery area. Even if the hospital does not give a tour, check with them about all their general policies for labor, delivery, and postpartum care. If you have other children, you might want to make arrangements ahead of time for someone to watch them when you go to the hospital for the delivery.

Before your due date, consider packing a suitcase for the hospital containing the following items:

- bathrobe, slippers
- cosmetics
- several nightgowns
- nursing bras (if you plan to breast feed or otherwise just two good support bras)
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- hairbrush
- loose fitting outfit to wear home

For the baby, have the following items:

- car seat for the ride home
- baby blanket
- a sleeper or nightshirt
- hat and heavier blanket if expecting cold weather
- two diapers