

# LABOR AND DELIVERY

## Welcome and Congratulations on the Upcoming Birth of Your Baby

We are delighted you have chosen UConn Health for your baby's birth. We have a commitment to offer you the best of both worlds. We focus on childbirth as a natural, intimate event to be experienced by you and your family, in a private room with all the comforts of home. At the same time, we offer advanced technology and specialized expertise, in case you or your baby need them. We offer a level 4 neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) equipped to handle any neonatal emergency.

### Family-centered Birth Experience

There is nothing more special than the birth of a new baby and the family attachments that begin. Sometimes you will feel exhilarated, other times you may feel exhausted, anxious or even frightened about your new responsibilities. During your brief stay at UConn Health, you will have opportunities to rest, celebrate, and begin learning how to care for yourself and your new baby.

We hope you have an opportunity to visit our facility in person before the big day. Please visit [health.uconn.edu/women](http://health.uconn.edu/women) to schedule a tour.

## Preparation for the Big Day

### What to Bring with You to the Hospital

- Slippers and a bath robe
- Camera
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Bath soap
- Eyeglasses or contact lens cases
- Socks
- Hairdryer
- Your birth plan, if desired
- Nightgown or pajamas
- Nursing bra
- Cosmetics/toiletries
- One "going home" outfit for baby
- One loose-fitting "going home" outfit for you
- Sweatpants or pajamas for the support person who will spend the night (must be over 18).
- Infant car seat and base

### Pediatrician

Just as you have thought very carefully about an obstetrician, it is also very important to choose a pediatrician prior to the birth of your child. When you present to the hospital in labor, please notify the Labor and Delivery staff who you have chosen to be your baby's doctor. Once you have delivered, the hospital staff will notify your pediatrician. After your baby is discharged, you will follow up with the pediatrician of your choice.

### Circumcision

If you are having a boy, a decision on circumcising will need to be made. Discuss the procedure with your provider if you have any questions. If you choose to have it done, your OB doctor will perform the procedure on the day after your baby's birth. The nurses will show you how to care for circumcision during your hospital stay.

### Breastfeeding or Bottle Feeding

Discuss the options with your doctor to help decide on the best option for you and your baby.

## Discomfort During Labor

The discomfort you experience during labor depends on several factors. There are different strategies you may use alone or in combination to help cope with your labor. Talk with your provider about your options in preparation of your baby's birth.

**Relaxation and breathing** techniques (showering, birthing ball).

**Analgesics** or pain relieving drugs will help provide pain relief to allow breathing and relaxation techniques to become more effective.

**Epidural** anesthesia blocks most pain perception; numbs your body from the waist to toes.

**Nitrous oxide** (laughing gas) is a self-administered gas that can be breathed in to temporarily relieve pain, without long-lasting side effects.

## Car Seat Safety

While traveling in a vehicle, the law requires that your baby ride in an approved infant car seat that meets current safety standards. It is very important to install the infant car seat before coming to the hospital. For maximum safety, read all instructions that come with the car seat to be certain that installation is correct.

If you are not sure about installation, you can call your local police department for help with proper installation, or schedule a child safety seat installation with the UConn Health Police Department by going to [health.uconn.edu/police](http://health.uconn.edu/police) and completing a request form. An officer will call you to make an appointment.

## Where to Go When It's Time

You will deliver your baby at UConn John Dempsey Hospital, 263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, CT. If you are instructed to go to the hospital during your pregnancy for any reason, you should go to UConn John Dempsey Hospital.

Between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., report to UConn John Dempsey Hospital Labor and Deliver by entering through the main hospital entrance and stopping at the information desk, where they will direct you where to go. Valet parking and drop off are available at the hospital entrance. Parking is available at the adjacent Lot H or Garage 3.

After hours, from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., use the Emergency Department entrance and stop at the desk for directions. Drop off is available at the Emergency entrance and parking is available on the top level of Garage 2.

Visit [health.uconn.edu/plan-your-visit/locations-and-directions](http://health.uconn.edu/plan-your-visit/locations-and-directions) for maps and directions.

## Your Arrival

When you arrive to Labor and Delivery, ring the bell to announce your arrival. Our unit is always locked to ensure the safety of you and your baby. You will be greeted by a nurse and escorted to your private birthing room.

## Admission Process

You will be placed on a fetal monitor to monitor your baby.

An ultrasound may be performed.

You will have a vaginal exam and the results of your exam will determine your plan of care.

An IV will be started. This will allow you to receive fluids and medications during your labor. It will be discontinued soon after your delivery.

You will be able to have ice chips, sips of clear liquids, and popsicles during labor. We will provide these or you can bring your own.

Once you are stable, you will be allowed to walk, relax in a rocking chair, or find another activity to help you relax.

You may have your support person and, if you wish, one other family member or close friend with you during labor and/or birth. During your stay in the Labor and Delivery Unit, children of the patient are permitted

but must have a caregiver other than their parents or support person.

### Your Birthing Room

Each birthing room has a special birthing bed that adjusts so you can deliver in the position you find most comfortable. Each room is also equipped with its own private bathroom and shower, as well as a television, telephone and refrigerator.

### Post Delivery

Delayed cord clamping has become more common and is a recommended practice. Ask your doctor and nurse about the benefits of delayed cord clamping.

Immediately after delivery, your baby will be placed “skin to skin” with you for one hour. This “golden hour” will encourage bonding and help your baby transition to life outside the womb. Your baby will be rooming in with you for your entire stay to help facilitate successful breastfeeding if you choose and will allow you to exercise your mothering instincts.

During the first hour after delivery, you will be closely monitored by your nurse; blood pressure, the firmness of your uterus, bleeding and your overall wellbeing will be continuously assessed. As long as you are stable, you will be able to eat food.

### Postpartum

After two hours of recovery in Labor and Delivery, you should be stable enough to be transferred to our postpartum unit. You will be educated on taking care of yourself and your baby throughout your hospital stay with experienced postpartum nurses.

### Rooming In

As a family-centered care unit, we believe that this crucial time after delivery is best spent together with your baby so that you can get to know each other. Rooming in with you and your family will give your baby comfort by being close to you, and will help your baby to feed and sleep better. You will benefit by getting to know your baby, learn to calm and soothe, and respond to hunger cues. You will also sleep better knowing your baby is in the room.

Staff will be available for questions about care for yourself and your baby, use this opportunity to learn and get to know your little one.

### Feeding

Our experienced nursing staff will provide routine checks on you and your baby, and monitor baby’s feedings and number of wet diapers to be sure your baby is getting enough to eat. Your nurse will assist you with breastfeeding or bottle feeding. Our nurses are experienced and can help you and lactation consultants are also available if needed.

Your baby’s temperature, respirations, color, and overall condition will continue to be monitored by your nurse.

### Daily Pediatric Exams

Just as you have thought very carefully about an obstetrician, it is also very important to choose a pediatrician prior to the birth of your child. When you present to the hospital in labor, please notify the Labor and Delivery staff who you have chosen to be your baby’s doctor. Once you have delivered, the hospital staff will notify your pediatrician. Daily pediatric exams during your hospital stay are normally performed by your pediatrician. After your baby is discharged, you will follow up with the pediatrician of your choice.

### Visiting Hours

Ask your family and friends not to visit if they are ill (including colds and flu). All other visitors should wash their hands when they arrive.

You may have a support person spend the night. Children are not permitted to spend the night.

All other visitors, including grandparents and siblings can visit from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

All visitors must be over the age of 12 and healthy. Children under 12 years of age are not allowed on the unit, unless they are a brother or sister of the newborn. Brothers or sisters under the age of 18 will not be allowed to stay in the room without an adult.

### Cesarean Section

You and your provider may determine that you will have a surgical birth before you go into labor, or possibly after labor starts. If it is determined in advance, you will have a preop office visit with your provider one week before your surgery.

## INFANT CARE

Once your baby is delivered, your health care provider may use a bulb syringe to remove fluid from the mouth and nose to allow your baby to take his first breath. Your baby will be cleaned with a towel, placed on your belly and you both will be covered with a warm blanket.

The following routine tests and procedures are performed on all newborns. If you have questions or concerns contact your pediatrician before you deliver.

### PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT

#### Apgar Score

Your baby will be scored on 5 different areas: skin color, heart rate, breathing, muscle tone and reflex response, once at one minute after birth and again at five minutes.

#### Vitamin K Injection

Vitamin K helps protect against a bleeding disorder in the first weeks of life. Newborns lack the necessary bacteria that produce vitamin K, therefore a shot is given at birth to supplement until an infant can make his own vitamin K.

#### Eye Prophylaxis

Your baby's eyes will be treated with erythromycin eye ointment to protect against any serious eye infections. Ointment is applied to both of baby's eyes within 1 hour of birth according to state law.

### NEWBORN SCREENINGS

#### Congenital Heart Disease

Pulse oximetry is a simple, non-invasive procedure used to measure how much oxygen is in a newborn's blood. A device is placed on baby's hand and foot with a sticky strip and a small red light or probe that connects to a monitor that measures baby's oxygen level in the blood and pulse rate.

#### Genetic Screening

A small amount of blood from baby's heel is sent to the state laboratory to screen for multiple rare metabolic disorders. You and your baby's pediatrician will be notified of an abnormal result. For more information about the State of Connecticut Newborn Screening Program call **860.920.6628**.

#### Hearing Screening

A screening that is common practice and non-invasive for early detection of hearing loss. Your baby will briefly be taken to the nursery for testing. If your baby does not pass the screening, a referral for further testing will be made.

#### Jaundice Screening

A jaundice, or bilirubin, screening is performed on all babies before discharge by measuring the level of jaundice, or yellow pigment, in baby's skin. A monitor is placed on baby's forehead and gives a reading. If the reading is high, a blood test for bilirubin is done.

#### Car Seat Tolerance Test

Babies that are born at less than 37 weeks or under 2500 gms will be checked to find out if it is safe for them to be placed in a car seat for the ride home. Your baby's breathing and oxygen levels will be monitored while in their car seat for 90 minutes. Your car seat and base will need to be brought to the hospital prior to going home so the test can be administered.

## SECURITY

To ensure your safety, all doors throughout the unit are locked at all times. Entry is only permitted by ringing the bell and there are security cameras throughout the unit. You will receive information about the system when you arrive. Never give your baby to anyone (including hospital staff) who does not match the photograph on his or her badge.

#### Security Bands

As soon as your baby is delivered, an ID band will be attached to baby's wrist and ankle as well as to mom's wrist. A band is available for fathers or other support person identified by the mother. A second security band will also be placed on baby's other ankle. You cannot enter the nursery or take your baby to your room without these bands in place. Please do not remove them.