

limited to a general practitioner or a community health center. Both can provide regular check-ups, answers to questions, immunizations and healthy diet suggestions for your baby. Many parents prefer to use a pediatrician (a doctor who specializes in caring for babies and children throughout the teen years).

Make sure you choose someone you feel comfortable with. If possible, watch the doctor with other children. Does the doctor have a pleasant personality and willingness to answer questions? Are the children and parents relaxed and satisfied with the service? Ask about office routine and policies for night/ weekend care.

Your child's health and growth are the responsibilities of both you and your doctor. Take the time to decide who your baby's doctor will be.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Having a baby is expensive. Even if you have insurance, you will still have to pay some costs (usually about \$2,000 for a normal delivery). Without insurance, your cost will be \$7,000 or more. Difficult deliveries and newborns with problems can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Don't wait until the last minute to figure out how to pay these costs — talk to your doctor or nurse now!



Your county Extension Service office has other free information to help you stay well. Just call us with your questions.

Released by Don Bower, DPA
Extension Human Development Specialist
and
Gail Hanula, RD, LD
Extension Nutrition Specialist

PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service, the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

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Gale A. Buchanan, Dean and Director

The University of Georgia
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Well on Your Way



FIFTH • MONTH Decisions, Decisions

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
The University of Georgia
College of Family and Consumer Sciences and
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences cooperating

Well on Your Way

FIFTH MONTH: Decisions, Decisions

By your fifth month, it is probably obvious that you are pregnant. Both friends and strangers may be giving you a lot of attention. You may feel marked as “a pregnant woman” when people look at your growing middle first. This is a natural reaction because people often are fascinated by the miracle of birth.

You may find women especially supportive at this time. Current mothers remember the excitement and uncertainty of having their own children. Childless women like to learn from your experiences.

Handling other people’s reactions at work or school may be a difficult task. You may like being recognized as a special person at times, but at other times you may want to be yourself, not mama. Keep in mind that many generations of women have been faced with the same challenge. You are a unique individual with memorable experiences. And soon you will have a baby who is one of a kind.

F I F T H • M O N T H



BABY’S GROWTH

The fetus weighs about 1 pound and is 1 foot long by the end of the fifth month. The heartbeat can be heard through a stethoscope. Ask your doctor to let you and the baby’s father listen to the heartbeat.

CHILDBIRTH OPTIONS

Parents have many choices concerning childbirth today. You can make an informed decision about how and where to deliver your baby by talking to doctors, nurse practitioners, midwives, hospital staff and friends.

Childbirth education classes teach the parents-to-be what to expect. Ask your doctor or nurse about your options. Listening to other parents’ experiences may also be beneficial. Be sure to plan well in advance of your due date.

BREAST OR BOTTLE

One of the many choices you as a new mother have to make is whether to breastfeed or bottle feed your baby.



Breastfeeding is recommended by health professionals. It decreases the baby’s chance of health problems such as infectious diseases, food allergies and chronic diseases. Much of this protection comes from the early milk (colostrum), which contains disease-fighting properties. Mortality rates are lower among breastfed infants than those who are formula fed.



Breastfeeding helps the mother’s uterus (womb) return to pre-pregnancy size faster.

If you don’t breastfeed, use iron-fortified formula. The biggest advantage to bottle feeding is that it can be done by other people. The “best” way to feed your baby is the way that feels right for you.

If this is your first baby and you are unsure what feeding method is best for you, try breastfeeding. If it doesn’t suit you, it’s easy to switch to bottle feeding later.

CIRCUMCISION

Another decision to make is whether or not to circumcise your baby boy. Circumcision is a minor operation in which the skin at the end of the penis is removed. Circumcision is not required medically, but many parents have religious, social or personal hygiene reasons for doing it.

Fathers often have a preference based on whether or not they have been circumcised. Discuss it with your doctor if you are unsure. Circumcision, if chosen, is usually done before the baby leaves the hospital.

THE BABY’S DOCTOR

Before your baby is born, you must choose a doctor who will care for your new baby. You might be unaware of the available services in your community if this is your first child. Ask friends and relatives for recommendations. A small community may be

