

**“MY VOICE MATTERS.
I WILL USE IT TO SPEAK UP.”**



**Department
of Health**

A Guide to Talking With Your Health Care Provider During Prenatal Care and After Having a Baby

Just Found Out You're Pregnant?

Finding out you're pregnant can be exciting! At the same time, you may have many questions. This guide can help you have a healthy pregnancy and delivery. It's important to get medical care early and throughout your pregnancy.

Talking with your health care provider.

It's natural to have questions and concerns. You have the right to speak up. Your health care provider is there to support you and provide the best possible care for you and your baby.



Some things to keep in mind before and during your prenatal visits:

- Write down any questions you have for your health care provider. Be sure to ask all of them during your visits.
- Before your visit, practice talking with someone you trust. This can make you feel more confident and prepared.
- Be clear and straight to the point about your concerns.
- If you have any pain or discomfort, be sure you tell your health care provider.
Example: “Yesterday at 9 p.m., I experienced a sharp pain on the left side of my stomach that lasted for two hours.”
- Don't hold back any information when talking with your health care provider.
- Be patient and open to suggestions.

You deserve the best care possible for your well-being and the well-being of your baby:

- Your health care provider is there to support you throughout your pregnancy.
- You should feel safe to speak freely without fear of being judged or shamed.
- You should always feel comfortable voicing your concerns.
- You should feel heard and respected throughout your visit.

Having trouble speaking up for yourself during your prenatal visits? These tips can help:

- If you don't understand something, ask questions.
- Bring a support person to help.
- Ask for an interpreter if needed.
- If your concerns are not taken seriously or taken care of, ask to speak to someone else.
- Do you still feel you're not being heard? You can file a complaint. If you are in a practice setting, ask to speak with the office or practice manager. If you are in a hospital setting, contact the patient relations department or file a complaint by contacting the Department of Health.



New York State Department of Health

Division: Hospital Complaints Hotline

Phone Number: (800) 804-5447

Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

Visit the New York State Department of Health website to file a complaint:

health.ny.gov/surveyd8/facility-complaint-form

For more support, contact your health care provider. They can offer advice and resources based on your needs and goals. Here are some resources to get you started:

- **Growing Up Healthy:** The Growing Up Healthy Hotline helps pregnant and parenting people in New York State find the help they need.
health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/health_care/prenatal/guh
- **New York State Parenting Portal:** Find caregiving tips and resources to enhance your role as a parent. <https://nysparenting.org/>



Empowering Yourself

Pregnancy is a special time, and it can also be challenging. You can do this! Just take it one day at a time. Your voice is your power. Use it to speak up for yourself and your baby. Remember, “Your Voice Matters.”



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