

Dear expectant parents,

We are thrilled to welcome you to the Saint Charles Family Birthing and Neonatal Intensive Care Units. We are here to support you as you begin this new chapter in your life!

Ideally, it is best to pack and have most items prepared to go by 36-37 weeks of your pregnancy, just in case you go into labor before your due date. If your pregnancy has complications, you may choose to get ready a little earlier. We want your stay to be as comfortable as possible, so we created a list of helpful items to bring to the hospital with you.

Delivering Mother Items:

- Hospital paperwork, identification card, insurance card.
- **Breast Pump:** you may need to use your breast pump prior to leaving the hospital. St. Charles has a skilled lactation team that can be consulted if feeding issues arise. This is an important item to remember, and can be obtained through your OB/midwife as you near the 36 weeks gestation mark.
- Toiletries: shampoo, conditioner, toothbrush, tooth paste, hair brush and ties, glasses/contact lenses.
- Pillows and soft bath towels are luxury items that will make your stay more comfortable, though we do have those if you don't bring your own.
- Comfortable clothes: robe, nightgown, slippers, socks, nursing/pumping bras.
- Drinks: if you have favorite sports or electrolyte replacement drinks, juices or water flavoring packets, please feel free to bring them. There are kitchen services and room services available as well.
- Reusable water bottle.
- Snacks: high protein snacks are always a great go-to in labor, as are protein shakes, bars or comfort foods. Consider snacks that are mild in flavor in case you aren't feeling very hungry as well.
- Comfort items: items that make your birthing experience more like a spa can go a long way towards making your experience more relaxing. Portable essential oil diffusers for aroma therapy with your favorite oils, sound machines, or portable speakers to play your personal music are popular choices. If you want the ambiance of candles, please only bring battery operated or plug-in options, as we cannot allow flames in the hospital for safety reasons.
- Eye mask or ear plugs to help with sleep.
- Phone charger

Baby Items:

- Car Seat: infant car seats are required to bring your new baby home.
- Going Home Outfit (or a few!). Baby is swaddled and in a diaper for most of their time in the hospital, but having a Go-Home outfit (and a backup) is great.
- Light swaddle blanket, for going home with as well.
- Nail clippers or file, babies are often born with long nails.
- Diapers and wipes will be provided by the hospital.
- Feeding items:
 - o If you intend to breastfeed, bring your electric breast pump, nipple butter or cream, and other lactation-related items.

- If you intend to formula feed, bring formula of choice, bottles, and cleaning items.
- If unsure, please come with questions and allow your medical team assist you to make the best choice for your family.
- Pediatrician: Do your research prior to having your baby and select a pediatrician who will take care of your baby after you discharge home. It is best to have a doctor or nurse practitioner picked out ahead of time, and call ahead to ensure they are accepting new patients. Most providers like to schedule a newborn visit 2-5 days after delivery so having a clinic picked out prior to your delivery will make scheduling appointments easier.

Support Person/Intended Parent Items:

- Snacks: have your favorite snacks on hand, try to bring healthy as well as snacky choices.
- Reusable water bottle.
- Comfortable clothes, activity books, crosswords, movies. Babies come into the world on their own schedule, some entertainment is good to have if there are waiting periods.

We also recommend you check out our virtual offerings before your arrival. We have a virtual tour of the department, as well as childbirth preparation and breastfeeding classes that are helpful to take before your little one arrives.

Congratulations! Please let us know how we can assist you as you prepare for parenthood.

Warmly,

Women and Children's Services, Saint Charles Medical Center