Taking Care of Baby and You
What You Can Look Forward To

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Welcome to Maternity Care

Welcome to Maternity Care at Vassar Brothers Medical Center (VBMC). Congratulations on your pregnancy, and thank you for choosing VBMC for the birth of your baby!

Our experienced staff is committed to helping you achieve a memorable birth experience. We offer attentive and personal nursing care, ongoing patient education and a family-centered approach.

Please use this booklet as a valuable resource for everything you need to know about maternity care at VBMC.

Be sure to also take our video tour at nuvancehealth.org/vassarbirthingcenter.

Your Doctor ________________________________

Your Baby’s Doctor ________________________________

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Please don’t hesitate to call us if you have any questions at any point during your pregnancy.

Vassar Brothers Medical Center (845) 454-8500
Admitting Office (845) 431-5648
Prenatal Classes (877) 729-2444
Center for Breastfeeding Support (845) 483-6178
Center for Bloodless Care (845) 483-6599
TTY/Accessibility (800) 421-1220
Getting Ready for Your Little One

Before the Big Day

This is an exciting time in your life, and there are many tasks to take care of before you arrive at VBMC to deliver your baby. The more prepared you are, the more relaxed you will be when the time comes.

COMPLETE A PRE-ADMISSION FORM

Please make sure you complete your pre-admission form and return it as soon as possible to the VBMC Registration Department (first floor).

This will speed up your admission process. If any information on your pre-admission form changes before your delivery, please call the Admitting Office at (845) 431-5648.

CHOOSE A PEDIATRICIAN

It is very important for you to select a pediatrician for your baby before delivery. Your pediatrician will be called to examine your newborn shortly after birth, so as soon as you arrive, please let the staff know who your baby’s pediatrician will be.
CONSIDER YOUR PLANS FOR FEEDING YOUR BABY

It is recommended that nutrition is provided exclusively by breastfeeding. Breast milk is the ideal food for babies throughout their first year of life, and breastfeeding mothers at VBMC are supported with competent, consistent education throughout this experience.

The Center for Breastfeeding Support at VBMC is located on the Labor, Delivery, Recovery, Postpartum Unit (LDRP) and is here to assist you in making your breastfeeding experience successful. Before you come to the hospital to have your baby, please feel free to call (845) 483-6178 with any questions regarding breastfeeding and the services provided by the Center for Breastfeeding Support. For breastfeeding information, International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants are available before delivery, during your hospital stay and after discharge, or you can visit nuvancehealth.org/womens-children/breastfeeding-support.

Before delivery  Prenatal consultations can be arranged. Additionally, VBMC offers a two-hour prenatal breastfeeding class that covers hands-on questions, as well as preparing to take your baby home. There is an additional fee for this class, which covers the class, book and attendance by the mother and one support person. Call (877) 729-2444 for more information.

During your stay at VBMC  During your stay at VBMC, you will have a nurse assigned to care for you and your baby at all times. If you and your baby are not able to initiate breastfeeding at the time of your delivery, your nurse will gladly assist you. Additionally, a certified lactation consultant will be on the unit daily, and will work closely with you, your nurse and other members of your healthcare team to help ensure a successful breastfeeding experience.

If you need additional assistance from a lactation consultant, contact the Center for Breastfeeding Support office by dialing extension 36178. If the department is closed when you call, please leave a message; we will respond as soon as possible.

After discharge from VBMC  Outpatient lactation consultations are available by appointment for mothers who need additional assistance after they leave the hospital. The Center for Breastfeeding Support also maintains a breast pump rental station. Please call (845) 483-6178 for appointment times and fees.
PURCHASE AND INSTALL AN INFANT CAR SEAT

New York State law requires that all children under the age of eight be restrained in a federally approved child safety seat.

It is the policy of VBMC to inform our new parents of the law requiring the use of safety seats for infants. The obligation of adhering to this law is the sole responsibility of the parents.

We advise new parents to study the owner’s manuals for their infant car seat and vehicle to properly install their car seat. The base of the seat should be secured in the vehicle before mother and baby are discharged. Car seats may be brought to the unit for securing infants at the time of discharge.

Nuvance Health offers free Child Safety Seat Checks in several locations in the Hudson Valley. Nationally certified technicians at Nuvance Health Community Education can also provide information on car seat requirements for special needs and premature infants.

We recommend installing the car seat four weeks before your baby’s due date. Call (845) 475-9746 to schedule an appointment or to discuss any questions concerning child car seats.

Here are four evidence-based recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (2018):

- Infants must remain in rear-facing car seats as long as possible.
- Forward-facing car safety seats from the time they outgrow rear-facing seats for most children through four years of age.
- Belt-positioning booster seats from the time they outgrow forward-facing seats for most children through at least eight years of age.
- Lap and shoulder seat belts for all who have outgrown booster seats. It is also recommended that all children younger than 13 years of age ride in the rear seat of vehicles.
CONTACT CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Case Management Department at VBMC is available to assist you and your family with questions regarding your stay, available community resources, hospital programs or any discharge needs or concerns. Things happen quickly once you deliver, so if you have questions or concerns before your arrival at VBMC, we encourage you to reach out to Case Management at (845) 437-3101.

When in the hospital, you can call Case Management, or ask your nurse to contact your Case Manager for you.

COMPLETE HIV TESTING

Even before your baby is born, you can take steps to protect his or her health. One of the most important ways you can help your child is to be tested for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

New York State leads the nation in the number of pregnant women infected with HIV. New York also has the most children with AIDS. That’s why, by law, all pregnant women are now offered HIV counseling and testing. This test is done routinely during one of your initial visits with your obstetrician.

If you’re HIV positive, we can help prevent your baby from becoming infected.

• It is important that anyone who has a positive HIV test begin taking medication as soon as possible to prevent transmission to the newborn.

• Please ask your physician for this test. Note that New York State mandates that if a woman is not tested for HIV during the prenatal period, either she will be tested on admission to the hospital, or her newborn will be tested immediately after birth.

• Because HIV can be transmitted through breast milk, you should not breastfeed your baby if you are HIV positive.

Visit hivtesting.org for more information.
COMMUNICATE REGARDING BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

VBMC has established a Center for Bloodless Care* for patients who request absolutely no blood transfusions. If you have an objection to receiving a blood transfusion, it is vital that you notify us right away by calling (845) 483-6599, and giving us your name, phone number(s) and due date, and indicate that you are calling because of the notice in your pre-admission packet.

We will set up an appointment to meet you in our office at the hospital, where you will be required to fill out three hospital forms indicating your wishes. After the forms are filled out, they will be sent to your doctor to review, and they can be discussed at your next doctor’s visit.

Call us at (845) 483-6599 if you have any questions.

*Bloodless Care means medical or surgical care without the use of donor blood transfusions.
What to Bring to the Hospital

It’s a good idea to pack your bag ahead of time so that when it’s time to go to the hospital, you’ll be ready.

FOR THE LABOR ROOM, CONSIDER BRINGING:

- Music to soothe and relax you. Bring a diverse selection, as different music may appeal to you at different stages of labor.
- Other relaxation items. You may want lotion for massage, or bring a tennis ball or rolling pin for firm counter-pressure massage. You may also want to try aromatherapy products: lavender and mint scents are soothing, while geranium, rosemary and chamomile scents are also good for pain relief and relaxation.
- Warm socks and/or a robe. Many women become chilled during labor.
- Lollipops or hard candies. These will help keep your mouth moist and provide you with energy; make sure it’s okay with your nurse before consuming these items.
- Focal point. You may want to focus on a favorite photo, small painting, print or other object during your contractions.
- Hair ties. If you have long hair, you may find it more comfortable to keep your hair off your face and neck.
- A special pillow if you have been using one during your pregnancy.
- Lip balm. Soothing balm or gloss will help keep your lips from drying out.
- Cell phone and charger.
- Camera/video camera. You’ll want to take photos of you holding the baby for the first time. Don’t forget extra film/memory cards and batteries. Please note that you won’t be able to record any procedures, and if you wish to take photos of staff members, please ask their permission first.

FOR THE POSTPARTUM ROOM, CONSIDER BRINGING:

- A robe and slippers. You might want to wear something of your own rather than just the hospital gown.
- Toiletries. You’ll feel better after your delivery if you take a hot shower, put on deodorant, and brush your hair and teeth.
- Nursing bras or supportive bras. These are necessities whether or not you plan to breastfeed.
Vassar Brothers Medical Center is now part of Nuvance Health
What to Bring to the Hospital (continued)

GOING-HOME OUTFITS

Bring comfortable, loose-fitting clothes to wear home. You’ll still have a belly after delivery, so don’t pack pre-pregnancy clothes; something that was comfortable when you were about six months pregnant will probably be a good fit.

A going-home outfit for baby should be comfortable and appropriate for the weather. Bring a stretch suit, an undershirt, booties and a receiving blanket. If it’s cold, include a hat and a bunting.

Don’t forget the car seat.
You will need it to safely transport your infant home, and it’s required by New York State law; you can’t take your baby home without it.
What to Do When Labor Begins

Checking in to the Hospital

Whether you arrive at the hospital for outpatient services or admission, you should go directly to the Maternity Unit.

- As you enter the main gate of the hospital, follow signs for the ER restricted lot. There are three parking spaces designated “Temporary Drop-Off for Maternity Patients Only.” Your driver can park temporarily in one of the designated spaces. There is also a valet parking service.

- Near the parking spaces, there is a door with signs on it that will direct you to the Maternity Unit.

- The vehicle can be parked in the VBMC parking garage. A parking pass may be purchased at the security booth or at the cashier’s office.

- Upon discharge, we recommend that your driver use valet parking.
ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Advance directives are verbal or written instructions made by you before an incapacitating illness or injury. Advance directives communicate that your wishes about your treatment be followed if you are too sick or unable to make decisions about your care. Advance directives include a healthcare proxy, a consent to a do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order recorded in your medical record and a living will.

Regardless of reason for admission, New York State law requires that any patient admitted to a hospital be asked about his or her advance directives preference.

You will be asked upon admission if you have any advance directives. If you have written advance directives, please bring a copy to the hospital when you are admitted.

For more information, you may call the Admitting Office at (845) 454-8500 ext. 72205.

WHAT TO EXPECT

We will make every attempt to provide you with a private room. Please be aware that we do have semi-private rooms, and if we are very busy, you may be placed in a semi-private room. We will move you to a private room, once one becomes available.

The length of stay for you and your baby is determined by your obstetric care provider and your baby’s pediatrician.
Welcome, Baby!

Bonding With Baby: A Family-Centered Approach

The birth of your baby involves every member of your family. Our family-centered approach at VBMC is designed to help everyone in your family—grandparents, siblings and other loved ones—bond with your newborn.

ROOMING IN
We strongly urge you and your newborn to spend as much time together as possible. Our rooms provide you with the privacy and space to allow your baby to stay with you 24 hours a day, while still being supported by your healthcare team.

A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT
Family-centered care provides more opportunities for you and your family to learn how to meet your baby’s needs. Your nurse will be there to assist you at your bedside, and to provide instructions about your care and the care of your baby. Lactation support is available for breastfeeding moms.

SKIN-TO-SKIN
Skin-to-skin contact offers benefits to mom and baby; therefore, it is offered, and strongly recommended at VBMC. Moms who engage in skin-to-skin contact are more likely to have a satisfying birthing experience, easier initiation of breastfeeding, increased bonding and a greater sensitivity to their baby’s needs.

The benefits to the baby are significant:

• A smoother adjustment to life outside the womb, leading to less stress, crying and pain
• Enhanced brain growth, especially in the first eight weeks after birth
• An easier time knowing when to feed and latch on
• An easier time maintaining temperature, heart rate, breathing and blood sugar
• A stronger immune system
• A decreased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
How skin-to-skin works:

Directly after birth (vaginal or cesarean), your baby will be placed on your chest and dried with warm blankets while resting with you for a recommended one to two hours. If you have a cesarean delivery, and are not available immediately after birth, skin-to-skin time can take place with your partner or other family members of your choice.

Please note, there may be times when skin-to-skin care must be delayed due to the medical condition of mother or baby.
Welcome, Baby! (continued)

Patient Education

Having a baby is a special time. We want to make sure that you feel highly satisfied with the care you receive at VBMC, and that you go home feeling comfortable about caring for yourself and your newborn. Your nurse will work closely with you and your family to provide the education you need, and he or she will be available to answer any questions you may have.

NEW MOM’S HANDBOOK

After you deliver your baby, you will be given a New Mom’s Handbook. In this booklet, we have attempted to provide you with information and forms you will need while you are a patient in the hospital and after you are discharged. We encourage you to read the booklet, and take it home for use as a quick reference guide. In addition, educational programs are available on your room TV with the Newborn Channel. Your nurse will provide you with a programming guide. You can also view education programs after discharge by using this link: nuvancehealth.org/healthclips.
Welcome, Baby! (continued)

For Your Baby’s Health

To promote the health of newborns, and comply with New York State regulations, all newborn infants born at VBMC will receive a single dose of injectable vitamin K within six hours of birth and erythromycin eye ointment within the first hour of birth. If you have any questions about this regulation, please discuss them with your obstetrician prior to delivery.

VITAMIN K

Vitamin K is a naturally occurring vitamin produced in the intestine that promotes normal blood clotting. Newborns are at risk for vitamin K deficiency, because vitamin K is poorly transmitted across the placenta, and intestinal bacteria in newborns does not produce vitamin K. Infants up to six months of age remain at risk for vitamin K deficiency, especially babies who are exclusively breastfed.

Vitamin K deficiency can cause hemorrhagic disease of the newborn, which can be life threatening. Any site of injury or trauma, including the umbilical cord and circumcision site, can result in bleeding.

To prevent hemorrhagic disease due to vitamin K deficiency, a single injection of vitamin K will be given within six hours of birth. Oral vitamin K is not recommended, because it is not readily absorbed by the body. This treatment is supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and is mandated by the New York State Department of Health.

Vitamin K is not a vaccine. Rare allergic reactions have been reported with vitamin K injection, including reaction and redness of the skin at the injection site.

EYE PROPHYLAXIS

Application of erythromycin eye ointment is given to all newborns within one hour of birth to prevent gonococcal and chlamydial infections of the eyes.

If not treated, these infections can cause blindness. The application of erythromycin eye ointment is mandated by the New York State Department of Health, and has almost entirely eliminated these forms of preventable blindness. There have been minimal side effects reported with the administration of erythromycin eye ointment.

1New York State Sanitary Code (10 NYCRR §§ 12.2 and 12.3) and the New York State Hospital Code (10 NYCRR § 405.2[e][4][v][b])
Infant Security

As parents, you can never be too careful, even in a hospital. VBMC has a state-of-the-art infant security system that will protect your infant during your stay with us.

For your new baby’s safety, the following guidelines have been developed:

• Never leave your baby unattended.
• Before giving your baby to a staff member, make sure the staff member is wearing a green Vassar Brothers Medical Center identification badge.
• Always use a crib to transport your baby safely in the hallway.
• Do not leave the Maternity Unit before discharge.
• Keep the crib on the far side of the bed.

Please respect these policies regarding visitors:

• All visitors must stop at the main desk on the Maternity Unit.
• While you are in labor, a maximum of three support people are allowed in your room. There is a waiting area available within the unit.
• The father or other support person can visit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
• All other visitors, including grandparents and siblings, can visit per your preference.
• Siblings cannot spend the night.
• For your baby’s protection, we ask that all visitors be in good health — that means no fever, cough, rash, diarrhea or colds.
• Visitor restrictions may vary due to Department of Health recommendations.
Neonatal Intensive Care

High-Level Care for Our Littlest Patients

The 15-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at VBMC is a Level 3b, which offers the highest level of medical and nursing care available for newborns in the mid-Hudson Valley. Should those services be required, your baby will receive expert, compassionate care in a nurturing, family-centered environment.

A member of the neonatal team is in the hospital 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the event that your baby may require specialized care.
Welcome, Baby! (continued)

When It’s Time to Go Home

- Discharge time is usually mid-day.
- Don’t forget the car seat! You can’t take your baby home without it.
- After the birth of your baby, please call your insurance company, and have your baby added to your insurance policy.
- Be sure to keep this booklet and the New Mom’s Handbook for reference.

If you need breastfeeding support, outpatient lactation consultations are available by appointment through the Center for Breastfeeding Support. Please call (845) 483-6178 for appointment times.
The Pregnant Patient’s Responsibilities

1. Take care of your health and your baby’s health, and obtain prenatal care as early as possible.

2. Provide correct and complete information about yourself, including present complaints, past health problems and hospital visits; medications you are currently taking, including over-the-counter, prescription, herbal and street drugs; and any other information caregivers need to know.

3. Discuss and share your views about your care, including pain needs and perceived risk or safety issues.

4. Plan your labor and birth with your family, support person and healthcare provider.

5. Follow the agreed-upon care plan, report any unexpected changes in your condition and accept the consequences for the outcomes if you do not follow the plan.

6. Follow the hospital’s rules and regulations.

7. Respect the property, privacy, dignity and confidentiality of other patients in the hospital.

8. Respect staff and property, and control noise.

9. Choose a pediatrician for your new baby before arriving to deliver, and inform the staff of your choice.

10. Refrain from the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs other than those prescribed by your care provider while on VBMC property.

11. Communicate your wishes and needs to the staff.
Your Rights and Responsibilities in the Birthplace

You have the right to participate in decisions involving your well-being and that of your unborn child, unless there is a clear-cut medical emergency that prevents your participation. In addition, you have the right:

1. To considerate and respectful care and treatment without discrimination as to race, national origin, marital status or ability to pay.

2. To know the names and qualifications of all caregivers.

3. To be informed by a caregiver, prior to the administration of any drug or procedure, the reasons why the drug or procedure is necessary, of any direct or indirect effects, risks or hazards to yourself or your unborn or newborn infant and any alternatives to such drugs or procedures.

4. To determine for yourself, without pressure from your caregiver, whether you will or will not accept the risks inherent in the proposed procedure.

5. To be informed prior to the administration of any procedure, whether the procedure is being administered to you because a) it is medically indicated, b) it is an elective procedure (for convenience) or c) for teaching purposes or research.

6. To be informed of your labor progress, your health and the health of your baby during labor and birth.

7. To be accompanied during the stress of labor and birth by someone you care for, and to whom you look for emotional comfort and encouragement.

8. To choose, after appropriate medical consultation, a position for labor and birth that is least stressful for you and your baby.

9. To have your baby cared for at your bedside if the baby is healthy, and to feed your baby according to your baby’s needs.

10. To be informed if there is any known or indicated aspect of your or your baby’s care or condition that may cause you or your baby later difficulty or problems.

11. To refuse to take part in research or participate in a teaching program.

12. To privacy for yourself, your baby and your medical records.

13. To review your medical records, and to obtain a copy for a reasonable fee.

14. To express complaints about the care and services provided.

15. To be informed of what you can do to be healthy and keep your baby healthy when you go home.
Choosing the way you will feed your new baby is one of the most important decisions you will make in preparing for your infant’s arrival. Doctors agree that for most women, breastfeeding is the safest and healthiest choice.

- It is your right to be informed about the benefits of breastfeeding, and have your healthcare provider and maternal healthcare facility encourage and support breastfeeding.
- You have the right to make your own choice about breastfeeding.
- Whether you choose to breastfeed or not, you have the following basic rights regardless of your race, creed, national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or source of payment for your healthcare.
- Maternal healthcare facilities have a responsibility to ensure that you understand these rights. They must provide this information clearly for you, and must provide an interpreter if necessary.
- These rights may be limited only in cases where your health or the health of your baby requires it.
- If any of the following things are not medically right for you or your baby, you should be fully informed of the facts and be consulted.
BEFORE YOU DELIVER

If you attend prenatal childbirth education classes provided by the maternal healthcare facility and all hospital clinics and diagnostic and treatment centers providing prenatal services in accordance with article 28 of the public health law, you must receive the Breastfeeding Mothers’ Bill of Rights. Each maternal healthcare facility shall provide the maternity information leaflet, including the Breastfeeding Mothers’ Bill of Rights, in accordance with section 2803.i of this chapter, to each patient or to the appointed personal representative at the time of prebooking or time of admission to a maternal healthcare facility. Each maternal healthcare provider shall give a copy of the Breastfeeding Mothers’ Bill of Rights to each patient at or prior to the medically appropriate time.

- You have the right to complete information about the benefits of breastfeeding for yourself and your baby. This will help you make an informed choice about how to feed your baby.

- You have the right to receive information that is free of commercial interests and includes:
  1. How breastfeeding benefits you and your baby nutritionally, medically and emotionally;
  2. How to prepare yourself for breastfeeding; and
  3. How to understand some of the problems you may face, and how to solve them.
Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill of Rights (continued)

IN THE MATERNAL HEALTHCARE FACILITY

- You have the right to have your baby stay with you right after birth, whether you deliver vaginally or by cesarean section. You have the right to begin breastfeeding within one hour after birth.

- You have the right to have someone trained to help you in breastfeeding give you information and help you when you need it.

- You have the right to have your baby not receive any bottle feeding or pacifiers.

- You have the right to know about and refuse any drugs that may dry up your milk.

- You have the right to have your baby in your room with you 24 hours a day.

- You have the right to breastfeed your baby at any time, day or night.

- You have the right to know if your doctor or your baby’s pediatrician is advising against breastfeeding before any feeding decisions are made.

- You have the right to have a sign on your baby's crib clearly stating that your baby is breastfeeding, and that no bottle feeding of any type is to be offered.

- You have the right to receive full information about how you are doing with breastfeeding and get help on how to improve.

- You have the right to breastfeed your baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. If nursing is not possible, every attempt will be made to have your baby receive your pumped or expressed milk.

- If you or your baby is re-hospitalized in a maternal care facility after the initial delivery stay, the hospital will make every effort to continue to support breastfeeding by providing hospital-grade electric pumps and rooming–in facilities.

- You have the right to have help from someone specially trained in breastfeeding support and expressing breast milk if your baby has special needs.

- You have the right to have a family member or friend receive breastfeeding information from a staff member if you request it.
WHEN YOU LEAVE THE MATERNAL HEALTHCARE FACILITY

You have the right to printed breastfeeding information free of commercial material.

• You have the right, unless specifically requested by you, and available at the facility, to be discharged from the facility without discharge packs containing infant formula, or formula coupons, unless ordered by your baby’s healthcare provider.

• You have the right to get information about breastfeeding resources in your community, including information on availability of breastfeeding consultants, support groups and breast pumps.

• You have the right to have the facility give you information to help choose a medical provider for your baby and understand the importance of a follow-up appointment.

• You have the right to receive information about safely collecting and storing your breast milk.

• You have the right to breastfeed your baby in any location, public or private, where you are otherwise authorized to be. Complaints can be directed to the New York State Division of Human Rights.

All the above are your rights. If the maternal healthcare facility does not honor these rights, you can seek help by contacting the New York State Department of Health, or by contacting the hospital complaint hotline at (800) 804-5447 or via email at hospinfo@health.state.ny.us.

Source: New York State Department of Health