

It's a season of emotions when you're having your first child.

Excitement and happiness lead the positive charge, nervousness settles right there in the middle and fear and anxiety creep into the mix as well.

Who knew two tiny pink lines on a pregnancy test could lead to something so earth shattering?

You've probably got a lot of questions running through your head, and it's natural to run to Google for a lot of things. But Mfowethu (**mm-FOE-eh-too**) Langeni, DO, a family medicine physician who specializes in obstetrical care with OSF HealthCare, has a kickstart list of what to expect when you're expecting.

First trimester | Increased hormones, morning sickness, first appointment!

Pregnancies are broken up into three trimesters, and Dr. Langeni says the best way to start things off is to schedule a first trimester appointment with a local obstetrics & gynecology provider (OB/GYN).

"Your first trimester is between the first week to the 13th week of pregnancy. During that time, you can expect to have your initial OB visit. It usually takes a little longer than subsequent visits, but it's one of the most important visits to have. During it, we'll talk about your family history, medical history, if you've been pregnant before," Dr. Langeni says.

You'll need to get some blood work done to figure out your blood type and make sure everything looks OK. You can also expect to undergo a pelvic exam, checking the anatomy.

You can also talk to your doctor about genetic screening to find out what things your baby may be at-risk for. These are things like cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, or Down syndrome.

One major change that comes with pregnancy is hormonal. This can lead to what's well-known as "morning sickness," which varies from mother to mother.

"A lot of times moms will experience morning sickness the most in the first trimester. It's usually because of the pregnancy hormone (human chorionic gonadotropin, or hCG) that spikes really high," Dr. Langeni says. "Then it starts to taper off, so those symptoms start to go away. You can get some nausea or vomiting throughout the whole duration of your pregnancy, but it's usually going to be the first and early second trimester."

Medications are available to ease the nausea and vomiting, but it's important to have that conversation with your OB/GYN on when it's safe (for you AND the baby) to take any medication. Dr. Langeni says he prefers to focus on diet recommendations first before jumping right into meds. He recommends eating smaller portions of food more often during the day as a starting point.

Second trimester | Grow, grow, grow!

"It's week 14 to week 27. This trimester is where your baby's internal organs are actively growing really fast," Dr. Langeni says. "This trimester is where you may see your baby bump grow and feel baby moving. It's also where an ultrasound will be performed to check the anatomy of the baby to make sure the baby is doing OK and the arms, legs, heart, brain and all the organs look OK."

Arguably the most exciting part of the second trimester is finding out the sex of the baby and getting those adorable ultrasound photos.

You'll keep seeing your OB team and at the end of the second trimester, you'll get testing done to see if you have gestational diabetes.

Third trimester | It's almost baby time!

In the third trimester, mothers' office visits become more frequent. You'll see your care team every two weeks from week 28-36, and then once a week from weeks 36-40.

"This is the part of the pregnancy where you start to talk about 'how am I going to deliver my baby?' There are different methods, vaginal delivery vs. C-section," Dr. Langeni says. "If we need to get baby out a little early, for whatever reason. We'll also talk about the things we're going to do once you're at the hospital. Are you going to have medicines? Do you want no medicine? We'll talk about pain management and things like that so you can get acclimated on what to expect when baby is right around the corner."

Dr. Langeni says it's extremely important to have a conversation with your OB about water breaking scenarios ahead of it actually happening.

"If you feel like your water broke, it's always recommended to come to the hospital or your primary obstetrician," Dr. Langeni says. "They'll do some tests to make sure your water is truly broken. But sometimes your water doesn't break, and then a scenario pops up where 'I'm past due and my water hasn't broken. I'm not going into labor, what should I do?' Those are really good discussions most providers will have with their patients before something like this happens. Then at least when something like this may happen, it's not the first time you're hearing about it."

Some OB teams will tell the mother she needs to be induced by a certain date, due to health and wellness of mother and baby.

"It depends on what your primary OB has in place for you. From my experience, a plan may be set in place that says when you hit a certain gestational age, for any reason, then we're going to go ahead and induce. Or if you haven't gone into labor by a certain point, we'll have you come to the hospital to start that labor process, so you can have a natural delivery."

If you're in your third trimester and you haven't scheduled a hospital visit to learn the lay of the land, you probably should! Dr. Langeni says this is a great way to see what a birthing suite will look like where you plan to deliver, learn more about the process and figure out specifically where to go in the hospital.

You can reach out to OSF HealthCare hospitals around the Ministry by filling out this [form](#) for a birthing tour. A Mission Partner will get back to you shortly and help set up your walkthrough!

Now, it's baby time! OSF has a "hospital bag essentials" checklist for the mother, baby and support person during your stay you can find [here](#). Birthing classes before you head to the hospital are important as well. Find those resources [here](#).

OSF has OB/GYNs and care teams throughout the Ministry. You can find a list of providers [here](#), along with locations and additional resources to help you on your journey to parenthood!