

Preventing Premature Birth

Know the signs of pre-term labor:

- Contractions (your belly tightens like a fist) every 10 minutes or more often
- Change in vaginal discharge (leaking fluid or bleeding from your vagina)
- Pelvic pressure — the feeling that your baby is pushing down
- Low, dull backache
- Cramps that feel like your period
- Belly cramps with or without diarrhea

*Call your healthcare provider
if you have any of these
warning signs.*



Full term for a healthy start.

Premature birth (birth before 37 weeks of pregnancy) is a common, costly and serious health problem.

It affects more than 380,000 babies in the United States each year.

Complications can be debilitating, permanent and life threatening.

Help give *your* baby all the time he or she needs — for the healthiest start!

Our Mission

Why we exist.

*We are called to reveal the healing love
of Jesus to those in need.*

Our 2020 Vision

What we are striving to do.

*Inspired by faith and committed to
excellence, we will lead the transformation of
healthcare in our communities.*

WomenCareWNY.org

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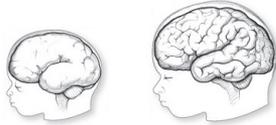
 **Catholic Health**

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Give your baby time

The last few weeks of pregnancy are crucial to baby's health because many vital organs, such as the brain, lungs and liver, are not completely developed until then.

A baby's brain at 35 weeks weighs only two-thirds of what it will weigh at 39-40 weeks.



Every week of pregnancy counts!

Infants born even a few weeks early have an increased risk of:

- respiratory distress syndrome (RDS)
- feeding difficulties
- temperature instability
- jaundice
- delayed brain development

Babies who survive an early birth often have lifelong health problems such as:

- cerebral palsy
- vision, hearing loss
- intellectual disabilities



About 15,500 babies born prematurely in the United States each year do not reach their first birthday.

Give your baby time — to celebrate!



You can reduce your risk of having a pre-term birth:

- Plan your pregnancy – get a preconception checkup to be ready to become pregnant.
- Space births – wait 18 months between birth and the next pregnancy.
- Identify and treat chronic health conditions, like high blood pressure, before pregnancy.
- Get to a healthy weight before pregnancy and control your weight gain during pregnancy.
- Don't smoke during pregnancy and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Go to ALL of your prenatal care appointments.
- Protect yourself from infections.
- Try to reduce stress.
- Wait until at least 39 weeks to deliver your baby – don't schedule an early elective induction or c-section in a healthy pregnancy.

If you have had a previous pre-term birth, talk to your healthcare provider about progesterone.