

Hospital Bag Checklist

What to bring when you're having a baby. Have your bag packed four weeks before your due date.



FOR YOU

Nightgown or pajamas - If your hospital doesn't require you to wear their gowns, you'll be more comfy in a gown or pajamas from home. Choose something loose and comfortable that opens down the front if you are planning to nurse. Pack one pair of pajamas or a gown that you don't mind staining as lochia may ruin them right after birth. (Or you could wear the hospital's gown until your bleeding lets up.) It's a good idea to bring at least three nighties or pajamas in case you have a longer stay than you planned for.

A bathrobe - You'll probably find yourself walking the halls in a nightgown and robe at some point while you're at the hospital. Bring something pretty that you won't mind wearing in public.

Slippers and socks - The hospital might be chilly, so bring socks and slippers for walking around your room or down the hall.

Underwear - The hospital will provide some mesh absorbent panties, but you may be more comfortable bringing your own underwear from home. Pack plenty, just in case.

Sanitary napkins - The hospital will provide napkins for you, but you might want to bring your favorite brand. You'll need comfortable, absorbent napkins with lots of coverage.

Nursing top and drape - A nursing top and drape

are convenient and will provide some modesty around visitors, if you plan to nurse.

Bras - Comfortable nursing bras or regular bras. Whether or not you choose to nurse, your breasts are likely to be tender and swollen when your milk comes in, which can happen during the first few days after delivery. A good bra will provide support and comfort.

Breast pads - These will absorb leaks and keep your clothes clean.

Toiletries - Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, a hair brush, lotion, shampoo and conditioner, lip balm deodorant, and barrettes or hair bands. Makeup, if you wish, for when you have visitors after the baby has arrived.

Comfort items - Your own pillow, music, a picture of someone or something you love, reading material.

Journal - Bring a journal, or pen and paper. You will be going through an emotional, one-in-a-lifetime experience and you may feel a need to record your feelings, or jot down a timeline.

Phone - Cell phone and charger.

List of people to call - So you don't forget anyone when you're tired after delivery. Have phone numbers programmed into your cell for easy calling.

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Eyeglasses - If you wear them. Even if you wear contact lenses, you might prefer the convenience of glasses while you're in the hospital.

Snacks - The hospital cafeteria may be closed when you need food, your own fresh or dried fruit, crackers, granola bar, or any special treat you might like. Also a bottle of water or juice. Be aware that hospitals may have rules about food that is brought in. Check with the hospital first, or have your partner bring in snacks after you've checked in.

Your going-home outfit - Something loose fitting and comfortable. You might still look pregnant (it takes a while for most women's bodies to return to their pre-pregnancy size). Comfortable, flat walking shoes. Remember a coat if it is cold outside.

FOR YOUR PARTNER/LABOR COACH

Toiletries - Toothbrush, toothpaste, razor, comb, deodorant.

Clothes - A few changes of comfortable clothes, including socks and comfortable shoes. Sweat pants or pajama bottoms.

Money - Change for vending machines and money for parking, the cafeteria and gift shop.

Camera - A camera or video camera, with batteries, charger, and memory card. Check the hospital's photo rules. Some hospitals don't allow videotaping of the birth, but you can record after the birth. Many hospitals do not allow photographing babies in a shared room. Only photograph your baby.

FOR YOUR BABY

Receiving blanket - The hospital will provide blankets for while you're there, but bring your own to snuggle your baby in the car seat for the ride home.

A going-home outfit - The hospital provides clothes for your baby, but you might want to bring something soft and comfortable from home. Be sure to consider the weather. If it's cold outside, you'll need to bundle up your baby. Remember a warm hat in all weather. Bring socks if the outfit doesn't have feet, and be sure the legs on your baby's clothes are separate so the car seat strap can fit between them.

Diaper bag - Bring diapers and wipes. The bag will also be handy to carry home extras from the hospital.

Car seat - A must. Your baby won't be allowed to ride home without an installed car seat. The seat should be installed ahead of time, and you should be familiar with how the straps and buckles work.
