

Centering Pregnancy®

“The Journey to Motherhood Together”

What is it?

Aimed at providing a more supportive experience for moms-to-be, CenteringPregnancy is a group-based model of prenatal care where 8-12 women with similar due dates attend regular provider-led meetings designed to exceed the standards of prenatal care and address all aspects of health and wellness in pregnancy. Studies have shown that families who attend Centering groups report greater satisfaction with prenatal care, feel more prepared for childbirth and parenting, and have improved maternal and newborn outcomes.

What happens during Centering group meetings?

After taking blood pressures and weights, participants have an individual assessment by a midwife to review their health data, measure the baby, and listen to the baby’s heartbeat. There is time to talk about any individual concerns. Any prescriptions, labs, ultrasounds, or referrals will be ordered by your provider and your results will be shared with you privately. After the one-on-one assessments, the group meets in a relaxed and casual atmosphere to discuss a variety of educational topics pertinent to where participants are in their pregnancy. Additionally, we discuss whatever is most important to the group. Common topics include baby’s development, nutrition, relief for discomforts of pregnancy, safety, childbirth preparation, infant feeding, postpartum adjustment, contraception, fatherhood, and much, much more. We may have yoga instructors, doulas, lactation consultants, pelvic health specialists, mental health providers, and pediatricians come as guest speakers. We can tailor the educational topics to what the group wants to know! Refreshments are offered and we have fun!

Why is Capital Women’s care offering this program?

Pregnancy and childbirth come with so many questions about what’s normal or healthy and what you should or shouldn’t do. It’s also emotional, and dealing with all of those feelings can sometimes be overwhelming. We want you to feel more educated, empowered, and supported during your pregnancy. Through CenteringPregnancy, you will spend substantially more time with your midwife compared to traditional care (20 hours compared to 3!). The group setting offers opportunities to share your thoughts and concerns with parents who are going through the same things you are. You will likely find that you benefit tremendously from the questions of your peers. It’s also a chance to form lasting relationships that can bolster you well past your pregnancy. Since this model of care has shown to be great for mothers and babies and make families feel more fulfilled at this special time, we want to provide it for you!



When do the groups meet?

Initially groups meet once a month, then every 2 weeks in the third trimester. There will typically be two additional visits during the last month of pregnancy that are conducted in the clinic, since weekly visits are recommended at that time. There is no time spent waiting: we meet directly in our meeting room, and we start and stop on time. Groups are scheduled on a set day of the week and time of day. You will receive all of the meeting dates at the beginning of pregnancy so you and your partner can plan your schedules and arrange child care for other children. Support partners are welcome to attend groups with you. Siblings are welcome to come for the individual assessment, but due to privacy agreements, groups are for adults only. A “baby reunion” is scheduled as a postpartum visit after everyone has delivered.

CenteringPregnancy is open to all pregnant women, both low and high risk. If supplemental care is needed either in our clinic, or with a specialist, it can simply be scheduled in addition.

Ultrasounds and labs will be scheduled before or after meetings. Glucose testing will be offered right in our meeting space.

Mom's Notebook

All Centering participants receive a notebook developed for Centering Pregnancy. The materials in the notebook are used to guide the discussion in facilitated groups. The notebooks become a written record of pregnancy and provide take-home educational content. They often become a keepsake women share with families and their children.

What about privacy?

We are required to protect your privacy and we take that responsibility seriously. The area where belly checks are completed is situated to enhance the feeling of privacy and safety. If you require an exam or have issues that require additional privacy, you will be seen in an exam room outside the Centering appointment. At the first group session, each person signs a confidentiality agreement and it is emphasized that participants' particular concerns should not be discussed outside the group setting. Ground rules agreed upon are posted in the group space and reviewed periodically. Your medical record remains private.

Rest assured that there is no pressure to share anything with the group that you are not comfortable sharing. However, most women find that the group quickly feels like a group of friends who are all going through similar things, and the benefits they receive from sharing their experiences are tremendous.

