Welcome to the Antenatal Unit
Nursing: Antenatal Unit
Welcome to the Antenatal/Postnatal Unit
Welcome to the High-Risk Antepartum and Post Partum Unit at Mount Sinai Hospital. This Unit offers a unique, multidisciplinary team approach to specialized care for women with challenging pregnancies or women who have pre-existing medical or fetal conditions that may pose problems during pregnancy.

The following booklet will introduce you to the Unit, the team, the daily routines, services and classes we offer to our patients and their families.

Your Interdisciplinary Health-care Team
This Unit is part of the Women’s and Infant’s Health Program at Mount Sinai Hospital. We are a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto. The following is a brief description of your health-care team.

Physician in Charge/Hospitalist (PIC)
The PIC or Hospitalist is the staff physician who is managing the care on the Unit. She/He will be the admitting/most responsible physician for high risk patients who are not under the care of an obstetrical practitioner at Mount Sinai Hospital. The PIC/Hospitalist will also provide co-care for patients admitted to the high risk unit who are already attached to a Mount Sinai Hospital obstetrical care provider. The name of this physician will be written on the white board in your room. The PIC will consult with the residents, other medical specialists and your nurses as necessary to understand and plan your care.

Maternal Fetal Medicine Fellow (MFM)
Fellows in our Unit are licensed obstetricians, who are continuing their education and specializing in high-risk maternal fetal medicine.

Resident
A resident is a physician who has completed medical school and is now spending time specializing in a particular area. Our residents are specializing in Obstetrics and Gynecology. During your stay at Mount Sinai Hospital, your condition may require the expertise of other medical disciplines.
Depending on the reason for your admission you may meet residents, fellows or physicians with speciality training in Endocrinology, Hematology, Cardiology, Rheumatology or Nephrology. Your baby’s condition may also require care from a neonatologist or specialists who are associated with the Hospital for Sick Children (across the street). If you are unsure who you are speaking with or why they are seeing you, please do not hesitate to ask them. For these consultations, a family member(s) is encouraged to be present. Your nurse is also available to be with you. Please do not hesitate to call him/her.

**Nursing Unit Administrator (NUA)**
The NUA is in charge of the daily functioning of the Unit. The NUA, along with the leadership team, is responsible for ensuring that nursing practice is in keeping with the College of Nurses of Ontario and Mount Sinai Hospital standards from a quality and a safety perspective. The NUA meets with patients from time to time to get feedback on the care they receive, which is cycled back to the team to give recognition or initiate patient care improvements.

**Nurses**
The nurses on the Unit are specially trained in high-risk antenatal nursing. They are an all Registered Nurse team. They have special skills, knowledge and judgement to manage your nursing care needs. Your nurse will be a source of information and support, your daily caregiver and your advocate. Please communicate all questions or concerns regarding your care to your nursing team that issues are addressed in a timely manner.

**Nurse Clinician**
The nurse clinician ensures the Unit’s staff members have the most up-to-date knowledge and skills to provide our patients with the best possible care. Part of the nurse clinician’s role is auditing or monitoring patient care. Through this process, the Nurse Clinician will discuss with the leadership team the best strategies to educate staff to ensure safe and high-quality care. The Nurse Clinician will also identify and address patient education needs.
Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)
The CNS is a member of the Unit’s nursing leadership. The CNS will be involved in the organization and coordination of your care. The most significant role of the CNS is communicating important information about your care to the entire health-care team.

Obstetrical Ultrasound Nurses
Ultrasounds are performed by registered nurses (RNs) from the Special Pregnancy Program (SPP) at Mount Sinai Hospital. Your ultrasounds are a great opportunity for you to learn more about your baby and how your baby is developing and moving inside your uterus. The ultrasound can give us information about the health of your placenta, blood flow and the position of your baby. If you are unsure why you are having an ultrasound, please ask your doctor or ask the ultrasound nurse.

Lactation Consultants (LC)
The LCs are an integral part of the health-care team. This group of professionals are highly trained to manage breastfeeding challenges that may arise in the postpartum period. The LC is also a source of information and support during your pregnancy, as you are preparing to breastfeed.

Pharmacists
The Perinatal pharmacists are an integral part of the Unit’s team. As part of the team, pharmacists participate in daily patient rounds to identify, prevent and resolve drug-related issues. The pharmacists routinely assess patient drug therapy, monitor patient response to treatment, and provide information and counselling for patients.

Neonatologists
Neonatologists are pediatricians who provide intensive care for newborn babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and the Level 2
Nursery. If a medical issue is identified during the pregnancy with you or your baby, these physicians will meet parents to discuss the possible impact on the baby’s health at the time of birth and on the child’s development. The neonatologist will try to meet with parents before the delivery so that they can share information to help parents prepare for their child’s birth and/ or any special care their baby may require. Your obstetrician will request a consultation from the Neonatology team at the appropriate time.

Social Worker
Social workers provide a wide range of services to our Unit’s patients. Specifically, emotional support for patients facing health and pregnancy concerns and practical support i.e. financial concerns, child care issues, accommodation plans for family members and so forth. If needed, the social workers will also liaise with community resources to ensure you have the appropriate support in place when you return home.

Psychiatry
The Perinatal Mental Health team works closely with the Unit’s staff. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties, such as depression or anxiety, your health-care team can refer you to a Mount Sinai psychiatrist. The psychiatrist will be available to meet with you for a one-on-one assessment. Based on that assessment, and in consultation with you, the psychiatrist will determine the best care plan. For some women, this may involve starting medication to help control symptoms; for other women it may simply involve meeting to talk and work through their concerns. After being discharged from Mount Sinai Hospital, you can continue your psychiatry care at the Hospital. The Hospital’s Perinatal Mental Health team have experience dealing with pregnancy-related emotional difficulties and are highly knowledgeable about the use of medications during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Chaplaincy
Sometimes being hospitalized during a pregnancy is difficult. We have many services to support you at these times. You may request to meet with a member of the clergy, at any time of the week or day.
Our Chaplaincy department will do their best to accommodate your denominational request. Our chaplains are multi-faith trained and have experience helping individuals with spiritual and emotional needs. Belonging to a religion is not a prerequisite for chaplaincy support.

Registered Dietician
The registered dietician on our Unit can help develop a meal plan to better suit your needs and/or health concerns. She is available Monday to Friday. An appointment with her in your room can be arranged by your nurse.

If you would like to receive snacks between meals, please let your nurse know and she/he will contact the dietary office.

Unit Clerk
The unit clerk may be the first person you encounter upon arrival to the unit. He/she will help facilitate your admission process. Unit clerks are available at the Patient Unit desk Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends to assist you with any non-nursing issues.

Support Services
The support service team in our Unit helps make sure you have a pleasant stay. Our service team works from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Their duties include bringing your meal trays, cleaning your room, taking you to different areas of the hospital for tests and on some occasions to the Hospital for Sick Children for appointments or to visit your baby.

Daily Routine
Communication (White) Board
Each bedspace is equipped with a patient communication board. Important information related to your hospitalization will be written on your board. The communication board will be used to keep you updated during your hospitalization including your readiness for discharge or
transfer back to your primary physician. Please inform your nurse or physician if there is information on your board that you do not want written there.

**Daily Rounds (Multidisciplinary Team Visit)**

Each morning, you will be visited by a multidisciplinary team. Every day, the Physician in Charge and nurse will discuss your plan of care at your bedside. On certain days, this team will also include a pharmacist and a dietician.

During this visit, it is important for you to inform your doctors and nurses of any concerns you may have or changes in your condition. We also encourage you to ask questions when the team visits. When you arrive, a notebook and pen will be at your bedside. Please use this to journal your stay and write down any issues you would like to discuss with your health-care team.

**Nursing Care**

Your nursing team works 12-hour shifts from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. occasionally, some nurses will work an eight-hour shift from 3:30 to 11:30 p.m.

**Nursing care for you:**

Nursing Shift Handover will take place at your bedside at each shift change. You will be introduced to the on-coming nurse, the nurses will check your ID band, perform a safety equipment check and update your communication board. Your nurse will return later to perform a complete assessment.

If you are hearing impaired or if you have any special needs, please inform your nurse when you are admitted so that the appropriate arrangements can be made for you.

**Presencing Rounds**

Your primary nurse will introduce you to her relief and together both will be doing Presencing Rounds every two hours from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Nursing care for your baby:
Your nurse will monitor your baby’s health status in a few different ways.

1. Using a handheld doppler, your nurse will listen to your baby’s heartbeat.

2. The cardiotocograph or non-stress test measures the uterine activity and fetal heart rate. Your nurse will administer this test after you’ve emptied your bladder. Two belts will be wrapped around your abdomen for approximately 25 minutes. During this time, your nurse will ask you to assist by reporting your baby’s body movements.

3. To help your nurse monitoring your baby’s health, you may be asked to count your baby’s movements at a time of the day when your baby is normally active. Get into a comfortable position and concentrate on the baby’s activity. Write down your baby’s movement on a form or a pad of paper, which will be provided by your nurse. You will also need to record the times you started and finished counting. Most babies are expected to move at least six times in a one to two hour period. If you have any concerns about your baby’s movements, please notify your nurse so that he/she and the team can fully assess your situation.

4. A fetal ultrasound is the safest, diagnostic imaging technique to detect any possible issues with the baby and get information about your pregnancy. Ultrasounds do not use any form of radiation that could harm your baby.

You may have a fetal ultrasound for a number of reasons:
- To confirm the pregnancy and the placenta location
- For Doppler studies that evaluate the blood flow to the uterus or the blood flow from the placenta to your baby
• To evaluate your baby’s growth
• To check your cervix length
• To identify fetal abnormalities
• To investigate symptoms such as bleeding
• To help guide needles for prenatal tests and fetal therapy

If an ultrasound is ordered for you, your care team will explain the reason. They will also review the ultrasound and report the results back to you as soon as the results are available. Please do not hesitate to ask for this information from your care team.

Diet & Activity
Your activity and diet recommendations are dependent upon your condition. Your care team will discuss these aspects of your care plan with you at the beginning of your stay and this will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. The team may ask the dietician to consult on a healthy diet plan for you.

Medications
Your nurse will give you medication as prescribed by your doctors. To ensure your safety, before your nurse gives you any medication, she will first check your arm identification band and allergy band (if you have one). It is important for you to be aware of the medication you are taking, why you are taking it and when you are taking it. If you have not been informed about your medication, please ask your nurse.

Your medication may be given intravenously, in which case an intravenous (IV) will be set up by your nurse or doctor.

Pregnancy brings with it important concerns about prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Not every medication poses a risk to your unborn baby. However, some do. Speak with your doctor about the risks and benefits of any prescribed drugs. And, consult your doctor first before taking over-the-counter drugs or naturopathic remedies (herbs).

You should not be taking any of your own medication while you are hospitalized. Please send all personal medication home with a family
member upon admission. If no one is available to take home your medication, give all medication to your nurse to safely store until you can send them home. If you are taking any medication not supplied by our pharmacy we will store the medication for you and dispense doses when needed. Please remember to ask your nurse for all personal medication upon discharge.

Tests
Any blood tests ordered by your physician, will be taken by the nurse/doctor. Your armband will be matched with your personalized labels before being sent to the lab. The results will be reviewed by the medical team. You may also receive urine samples or collections and swabs. For diagnostic tests such as an X-ray, ultrasound, MRI, CT, leg dopplers, or an echocardiogram, you will be escorted by a porter to the appropriate area. A family member is welcome to go with you. The results of these tests are also reviewed by your health-care team as soon as they become available.

Transfer for Mothers to another Hospital
When our NICU nursery is closed, you may be transferred to another hospital even though your primary physician is at Mount Sinai Hospital, in order to ensure the safety of you and your baby.

If you were transferred to Mount Sinai Hospital from another hospital, we do our best to ensure your return during pregnancy to your own community hospital, when it is deemed safe to do so.

Armbands
Patients with a cervical or abdominal cerclage will be given a green armband in addition to their identification and any allergy bands. Please leave this armband on until delivery as it is used as a quick identification by all staff.

On admission you will be asked to designate a support person who will receive an armband as security identification. This armband should be left on for the duration of your hospitalization. If your support person changes, the new support person will be identified by wearing a sticker/tag which states “Replacing designated support person”.
Discharge
If you have a vaginal delivery, once you are stable and you meet the criteria for discharge, you will be discharged from the hospital in 12-24 hours.

If you have a caesarean birth, once you are stable and you meet the criteria for discharge, you will be discharged from the hospital in 48 hours.

Other Helpful Information
Meals are brought at the following times:
- Breakfast: 8:30 a.m.
- Lunch: 12 noon
- Dinner: 5 p.m.

- If your meal does not follow your dietary needs or allergies, please press your call bell and inform your nurse.
- Snacks are delivered twice per day upon request.
- We do our best to accommodate semi-private and private room requests based on your personal insurance coverage or preference.
- Your televisions can be set up in the evenings, seven days a week. The representative will come to you but if you miss them, speak to your nurse.
- We recognize the importance of having your family and friends around you during this time and we encourage you to have them visit. For large groups of visitors, please use the visitor’s lounge located at the south end of the Unit. Please be respectful of other patients who might be sharing a room with you and keep the volume on television shows/movies low and turn off overhead lights after 10 p.m. If you need to use the telephone at night, please try to speak softly.
- Everyone at Mount Sinai Hospital should be treated with dignity and respect. This is not the place for abusive language; angry shouting; comments, jokes or slurs that demean or are hurtful about a person’s race, religion, ethnicity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. If you have any concerns speak to your nurse, the unit manager, or patient relations.
- Pet Visitation: If your stay on the Antenatal Unit is anticipated to be a long one, arrangements can be made to have your pet visit you. Please ask your nurse to go over the policy for such a visit.
- The patient lounge has two computers with internet access, a television, reading material and toys for young children.
Mount Sinai is pleased to be able to offer you and your family spiritual support. Please ask your nurse for more information regarding our Synagogue on the Main Floor (behind Second Cup) and the Spiritual Oasis located on the 4th floor, Room 432.

We have two wonderful libraries of DVDs and books in the hallway at the nursing station. Movies and books can be borrowed at no cost to you; however, we kindly ask that you sign out only one item at a time. Please ask your nurse for the book with all the movie titles or visit the nursing station to access the libraries.

The pantry is located in the middle of the unit for your use. An ice and water machine is located within the pantry as well as a microwave. Please use the fridge to store your own food/drinks — you will need to label your containers or bags with your last name. Labels can be obtained from the nursing station. We ask that you remove your food upon discharge or discard any food you are not planning to eat. Please note: There is a designated fridge for expressed breast milk.

There are many restaurants in the area. Please ask your nurse for a list. Before leaving the Unit, please consult with your care team to ensure it’s safe for you to be away from the Unit.

Laundry services are available within the hospital at a cost. Please ask your nurse for further details if you need laundry services.

Releasing Time to Care (RTC) is a quality improvement initiative implemented on various nursing units at Mount Sinai Hospital. RTC aims to improve safety, efficiency and quality of care. To learn more about RTC and the improvements tracked on our unit, you can visit the RTC information boards in front of the nursing station or join our discussions at the boards at 11:15 a.m. on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Prior to being discharged, you will be asked to complete a discharge survey regarding your stay on our unit. This survey will help us to improve the care we provide to patients on our unit. You will also receive another survey a few months after being discharged about your overall hospital experience.

Unit Activities

Patient Support Group

Join us on Wednesday afternoons for our patient support group in the family lounge. Meet other women who are hospitalized with pregnancy complications and discuss the challenges faced during hospitalization.
Prenatal Education Sessions
Once a week (usually Friday afternoons), patients are encouraged to attend a prenatal education group in the family lounge. A nurse will facilitate an educational session based on the needs of the group. Session topics include: labour and birth, caesarean sections, analgesia and anaesthesia options for birth, challenges in twin and triplet pregnancies, complications in pregnancy such as threatened preterm labour, premature rupture of membranes, pregnancy-induced hypertension, gestational diabetes, short cervix and the role of the cerclage. Attending these sessions will give patients an opportunity to meet other patients on the unit, share ideas and ask questions. If you are unable to leave your bed, your nurse can arrange for teaching to happen at your bedside. If you are unable to leave your bed, your nurse can arrange for teaching to happen at your bedside.

Antenatal Breastfeeding Support
“Baby Steps to Breastfeeding” meetings are held every Thursday and Sunday from 1 to 2 p.m. in the 7th floor classroom. These meetings are led by lactation consultants who will discuss the benefits of breast milk and breastfeeding, as well as review breast pumping, skin-to-skin care and the transition to breastfeeding. You are welcome to attend the meetings even if your baby has not yet been born. If your baby is born preterm and needs to be admitted to the NICU, the NICU lactation
consultants will be able to assist you with breast pumping or initiating breastfeeding. The lactation Consultants can be paged by your nurse, or you can leave them a message at ext. 6373. The lactation Consultants can be paged by your nurse, or you can leave them a message at ext. 6373.

**Tours**
You are encouraged to tour the NICU and Labour & Delivery. Please ask your nurse to make these arrangements at a time that is best for you and your partner.

**Wellness Services**
Massage is beneficial for musculoskeletal discomforts associated with pregnancy. Prenatal massage helps relieve edema and/or swelling by stimulating circulation throughout the body. Massage is also very beneficial for reducing anxiety, and can help promote a more restful sleep preventing pregnancy-related insomnia. Massage will relax you and your baby.

The Rehab and Wellbeing Centre at Mount Sinai offers a full range of rehabilitation therapy including: acupuncture, chiropractic care, physiotherapy, podiatry, and massage therapy and is conveniently located on the 11th floor of Mount Sinai Hospital. Funds generated by our centre are directed to the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation to support Hospital programs.

The Rehab and Wellbeing Centre can be contacted by calling 416-619-5546 or visiting the website at www.mountsinai.on.ca/wellbeing/wellbeing-centre

Please note: If you are interested in booking an appointment, you will need to discuss this with your care team as massage, acupuncture; chiropractic care or physiotherapy may be contraindicated in your situation.
What You will Need During Your Stay
  • Your Ontario Health Card and Mount Sinai Hospital Card
  • A favourite pillow, blanket or throw
  • Book/crafts you enjoy
  • Laptop/charging cord
  • Phone/charger/address book/stamps
  • Pyjamas
  • Comfortable clothes
  • Hair brush/comb, elastics, clips and/or hair band
  • Underwear
  • Sanitary pads/panty liners
  • Toothpaste and toothbrush
  • Shampoo and conditioner
  • Soap
  • Lip moisturizer
  • Other toiletries
  • Ear plugs
  • Kleenex
  • Sanitizing wipes
  • Small flashlight, playing cards
  • Glasses/contact lens care items if needed
  • Change/coins for snack machine

When you are first admitted to the Unit, we will supply you with a peri-bottle, and some sanitary pads until you can bring your own supply. On the main floor of the Hospital there is a Rexall Drug Store & Pharmacy for you to pick up anything you may need.
Antenatal Unit
Mount Sinai Hospital
Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Health Complex
600 University Avenue, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5G 1X5
416-586-4800 ext. 4525

Your room extension is labelled on the corner of the light above your bed.

TTC subway/streetcar access
Elizabeth St. Bus Terminal;
GO Transit and other carriers;
Union Station is on Front St.

Mount Sinai Hospital
Ontario Power Generation Building
700 University Ave.
600 University Ave.
60 Murray St.
Centre for Fertility & Reproductive Health
250 Dundas St. West
(Parking available underground)
To donate, call 416-586-8203 or visit supportsinai.ca
EVERY GIFT HELPS US CONTINUE TO DELIVER THE BEST MEDICINE.

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MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL
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