

# ASPERA MEDICAL CENTER

## Guide to Antenatal and Postnatal Care



2024

[www.asperamedical.org](http://www.asperamedical.org)



# Guide to Antenatal and Postnatal Care at Aspera Medical Center



## Welcome to Aspera Medical Centre

Dear future mother,

Welcome to **Aspera Medical Centre**, your multidisciplinary women's and family's health center in **La Bascule, Uccle**. At Aspera, we are committed to providing you with comprehensive, personalized care throughout your health journey, from conception to childbirth and the postnatal period. Our team of specialists will support you with kindness, professionalism and empathy to make this important stage of your life a unique and reassuring experience.

Our services include gynecological consultations, personalized pregnancy monitoring, pediatric care and a range of physiotherapy, osteopathy, psychological, naturopathic and nutritional services for your overall wellbeing. The aim of this guide is to provide you with all the information you need for your pregnancy, birth and postnatal care at Aspera.

“Dear Patients,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Aspera Medical Centre, a place that we have carefully designed to meet all your healthcare needs, with a particular focus on perinatal care. As an obstetrician-gynaecologist and founder of Aspera, my vision was to create a place where every woman feels listened to, accompanied and supported at every stage of her life.

At Aspera, we believe in a holistic and personalised approach to medicine, taking into account not only the physical health but also the emotional and psychological aspects of our patients. By bringing together a multidisciplinary team of gynaecologists, midwives, paediatricians, general practitioners, psychologists, physiotherapists, osteopaths, nutritionists and many others, we aim to provide you with high quality care in a welcoming, modern environment.

We are committed to supporting you at every stage of your pregnancy, from antenatal care to postnatal care and birth. Our workshops, specialist consultations and multidisciplinary services are designed to give you the support you need to feel at ease during this time.

I would like to thank you for your confidence in us and I'm confident that we will be able to provide you with the support you need to meet your expectations.

See you very soon at Aspera”

**Dr Iphigénie de Selliers**  
**Obstetric gynaecologist**  
**Founder of Aspera Medical Center**





# Aspera Medical Center

## Medical Care



### Why choose Aspera?

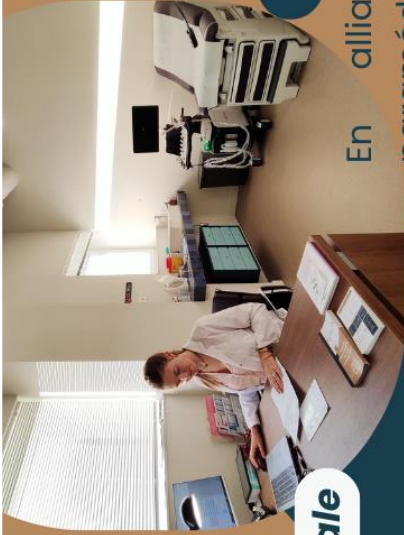
- **A comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach** : Unlike other, more specialised centres, Aspera offers a wide range of treatments under one roof, enabling patients to receive comprehensive care without having to consult several facilities.
- **Holistic care** : At Aspera, women's health is approached as a whole : physically, mentally and emotionally. We focus not just on the medical aspect, but on general well-being.
- **Personalized care**: Each patient receives special, individual attention. Our team takes the time to get to know each patient and her health journey, as well as her specific needs, history and preferences.
- **Modern, pleasant surroundings** : Unlike medical facilities that are sometimes impersonal, Aspera offers a welcoming, soothing environment where every patient feels at ease. Our equipment also complies with the highest quality standards.

### Testimonials:

*'I know this medical centre from Dr de Selliers. My gynaecological consultations and pregnancy check-ups with her are a pleasure. A caring and competent gynaecologist, she makes you feel cared for at every stage of the maternity process. The midwife was also one of the specialists I met, providing 360-degree support.'*

*The centre is full of specialists who are there for the medical and paramedical needs of women in particular. I think it's great to have so much expertise in one place. I'd recommend it to anyone who wants comprehensive, friendly care that's not hospital-like.'* **Sarah D.**





## Equipe Médicale



**Dr. Iphigénie de Selliers**  
Gynécologue & Fondatrice Aspera



**Pr. Caroline Kadji**  
Gynécologue Obstétrique



**Dr. Agathe Bridier-Petit**  
Gynécologue



**Dr. Fabian De Smedt**  
Gynécologue Sénologie & chirurgie



**Dr. Salomé Oleksiak**  
Médecin Généraliste



**Dr. Solange de Wouters**  
Orthopédiste pédiatrique

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**Ivy Duong**  
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**Patrick Bensen**  
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**Salomé Levy**  
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**France de Sadeleer**  
Sexologue  
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**Carolina Geymonat**  
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**Michela Fornis**  
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**Olivia Delloye**  
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**Zoé Hermant**  
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**Jalna Gistelincx**  
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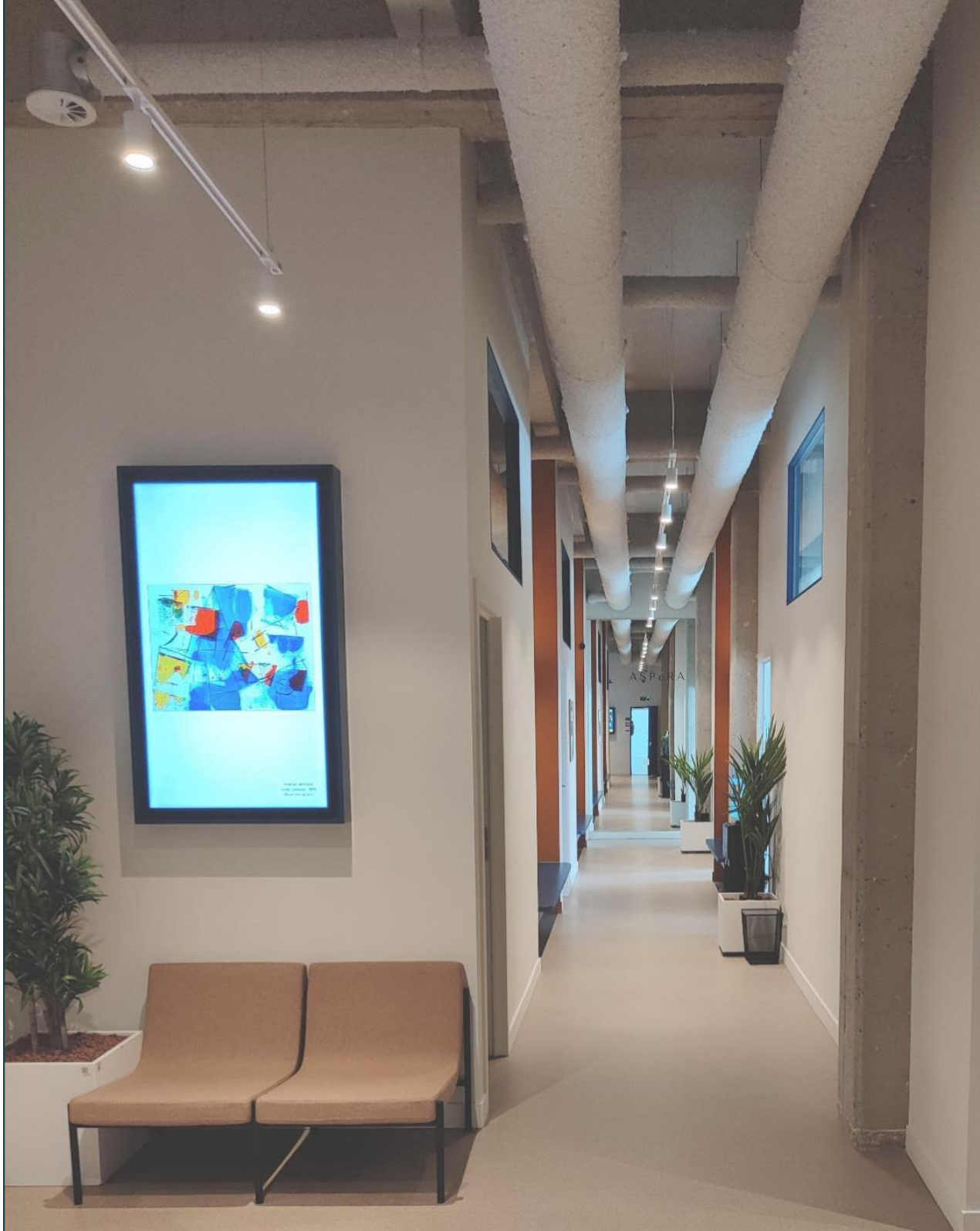
# Aspera Medical Center

## Caring for Every Step



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# Prenatal Follow-up at Aspera



ASPERA  
Caring for Every Step

## Antenatal Care at Aspera Medical Center



### What examinations and tests should be carried out throughout your pregnancy?

Our multidisciplinary team is constantly working to provide you with the best possible care. We work together every day to give you the best possible care, not only during pregnancy, but also after birth and until your children reach adulthood.

- **Initial consultation :** At your first appointment, we'll discuss your medical history, your expectations and the tests you'll need throughout your pregnancy.
- **Ultrasound scans :** Several ultrasound scans will be done during your pregnancy to monitor your baby's development. Important ultrasound scans include
  - o **First trimester scan (around 12 weeks):** For an initial morphological study and to screen for trisomy 13-18-21
  - o **Morphological ultrasound (around 22 weeks):** To analyse the morphology of the foetus.
  - o **Third-trimester ultrasound (from 32 weeks):** To monitor the baby's growth and carry out a further examination of foetal morphology.
- **NIP testing:** We offer screening tests for chromosomal abnormalities (such as trisomy 21) using a blood sample taken from the mother.
- **Gestational Diabetes Testing :** On the first Friday of every month, Aspera invites you to our special gestational diabetes testing event. We know that these tests can seem long and uncomfortable, so we've decided to make the wait a rewarding and relaxing experience. The test takes 2 hours and you will need to fast.



**Gestational diabetes testing programme:** every hour while waiting between blood tests (1 at the beginning, 1 after 1 hour and the last after 2 hours).

- **Aspera midwife session (30 minutes) :** Use this time to get valuable advice and personal support from your midwife. You'll be able to discuss any concerns you may have and receive important information about your pregnancy.
- **Aspera Osteopathic Session (30 minutes) :** Then relax with an osteopathic session. This will help relieve tension and improve your physical wellbeing during pregnancy.
- **Aspera meditation session (1 hour) :** End your morning with a meditation session guided by our kinesiologist. This session will help you relax, reduce stress and connect with your baby.

### Why take part?

- **Comfort and well-being:** Turn an often boring wait into an opportunity for well-being and relaxation.
- **Professional Support:** Benefit from the advice and care of our specialist healthcare professionals.
- **Enriching Experience:** Learn valuable techniques and information for your pregnancy and overall well-being.

## Visits agenda



# The Technical Details of My Pregnancy



## My ultrasound

### 1. Ultrasound T1 (First Ultrasound - between 11 and 13 weeks)

The T1 ultrasound is typically performed between the 11th and 13th weeks of amenorrhea (WA), during the first trimester of pregnancy. Its purpose is to confirm the pregnancy, ensure it is progressing well, and establish the foundation for medical follow-up.

#### Objectives of the T1 ultrasound:

- **Confirmation of pregnancy:** The ultrasound allows visualization of the embryo and ensures it is located in the uterus (not in an abnormal location like an ectopic pregnancy).
- **Measurement of nuchal translucency:** One of the main objectives of this ultrasound is to measure nuchal translucency, a small space at the back of the embryo's neck. This measurement, combined with other tests (blood tests for serum markers), helps assess the risk of chromosomal abnormalities such as Down syndrome.
- **Determination of the exact due date:** By measuring the embryo's size (known as the crown-rump length or CRL), the pregnancy can be dated accurately, and the estimated due date (EDD) can be set.
- **Visualization of organs :** At this stage, certain structures like the head, arms, legs, and internal organs in formation can already be observed.

This first ultrasound is often an emotional moment for expectant parents, as it is the first time they can see their baby and hear its heartbeat.

### 2. Ultrasound T2 (Morphological Ultrasound - between 20 and 24 weeks)

The T2 ultrasound, also known as the morphological ultrasound, is performed between the 20th and 24th weeks of pregnancy, typically in the second trimester. It is one of the most anticipated examinations as it provides a detailed evaluation of the fetus's anatomical development.

### Objectives of the T2 ultrasound:

- **Examination of fetal morphology:** During this ultrasound, all the fetus's organs are meticulously examined, including the brain, heart, lungs, kidneys, spine, limbs, etc. The goal is to detect any morphological abnormalities or potential malformations.
- **Verification of proper development:** The gynecologist ensures that the development of the fetus's internal organs is progressing normally. At this stage, the baby's movements are also observed.
- **Placenta evaluation:** The position of the placenta is assessed to rule out complications such as placenta previa, which could obstruct delivery.
- **Amniotic fluid measurement:** The volume of amniotic fluid is measured to ensure it is adequate to protect and nourish the baby. Too little fluid (oligohydramnios) or too much (polyhydramnios) could indicate problems.
- **Determination of the baby's sex:** If desired, and depending on the fetus's position, the baby's sex can be determined at this stage. This moment is often eagerly awaited by expectant parents. Keep in mind that the baby's sex can also be known through the NIPT test.

The morphological ultrasound is crucial to ensure the fetus is developing well and to detect any anomalies that may require special monitoring or additional interventions.

---

### 3. Ultrasound T3 (Growth Ultrasound - between 32 and 35 weeks)

The T3 ultrasound, or growth ultrasound, is performed between the 32nd and 35th weeks of pregnancy, usually in the third trimester. It ensures the baby continues to develop well and prepares for birth.

### Objectives of the T3 ultrasound:

- **Verification of fetal growth:** The gynecologist measures the baby's size, head circumference, abdominal circumference, and femur length to ensure proper development according to gestational age.
- **Fetus position:** The ultrasound checks the fetus's position in preparation for delivery. By this stage, most babies are head-down (cephalic position), but some may be breech (bottom-down) or transverse (horizontal). If the baby is breech, a procedure may be suggested to attempt to turn the baby before delivery.

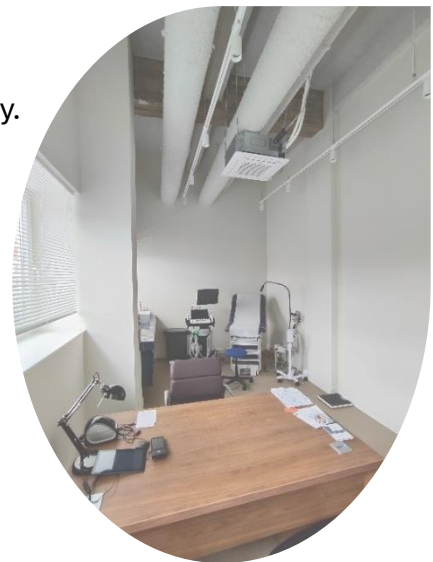


- **Estimation of weight:** By measuring various parameters, the baby's birth weight can be estimated. This helps anticipate potential complications, such as macrosomia (a baby too large) or intrauterine growth restriction (a baby too small).
- **Assessment of the placenta and amniotic fluid:** The ultrasound ensures the placenta is functioning properly and that the amount of amniotic fluid is sufficient. These factors are essential to ensure the baby is well-nourished and oxygenated until delivery.
- **Preparation for delivery:** If growth anomalies or other complications are detected, interventions or specific follow-up plans can be made to ensure a safe delivery.

These three ultrasounds are major milestones in monitoring your pregnancy. They not only ensure the fetus's development but also guarantee that you and your baby receive the necessary care for a smooth pregnancy and safe delivery. At every step, our team is here to support you, answer your questions, and provide reassurance.

You can certainly have an ultrasound at **each visit to your gynecologist**. If you have any questions or concerns at any point during your pregnancy, do not hesitate to consult our gynecologists or midwives.

We are here for you, at every step of this wonderful journey.



## Monitoring

At Aspera, we do everything possible to ensure optimal monitoring of your pregnancy and your baby's health. One of the key tools for monitoring the proper progression of pregnancy, especially in the last few weeks, is fetal monitoring, also known as cardiotocography. This non-invasive test monitors both your baby's heart rate and your uterine contractions.

### What is fetal monitoring ?

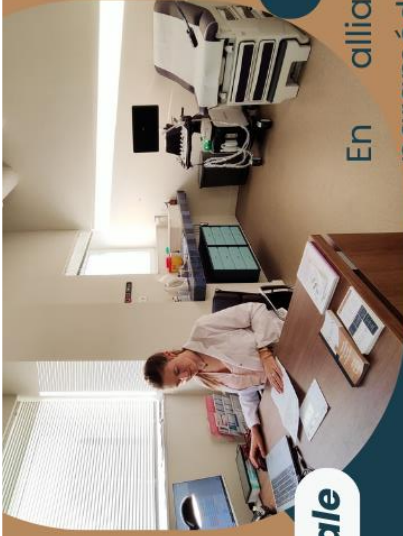
Fetal monitoring is a test generally performed during the third trimester of pregnancy. It checks the well-being of your baby by simultaneously measuring two parameters:

1. **Fetal heart rate:** This ensures that your baby's heart is beating normally and reacts well to movements or contractions.
2. **Uterine contractions:** Monitoring measures the intensity, duration, and frequency of your contractions to assess uterine activity, especially in the last weeks of pregnancy.

### Why is monitoring necessary ?

Fetal monitoring is used in several situations to:

- **Monitor a high-risk pregnancy:** If you have medical history or complications during pregnancy (such as gestational diabetes, hypertension, or intrauterine growth retardation), your doctor may recommend regular monitoring.
- **Monitor the baby's health in the final days before delivery:** This test ensures that the fetus tolerates the contractions well and that its heart rate remains stable.
- **Check the baby's responsiveness to contractions:** During labor, monitoring is often used continuously to ensure that the baby tolerates the delivery well and that its heart rate remains within normal limits.
- **Examine uterine contractions:** If you experience early or irregular contractions, monitoring can determine their intensity and assess whether they indicate imminent labor.
- **And most importantly, say hello to your baby!**



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**Pedro Mondaca**  
Kinésologue



**Joy Sarot**  
Kinésologue

# Precautions you should take during your pregnancy?



These precautions aim to **protect both mother and baby from infections, toxins, and substances** that could compromise the pregnancy and the development of the fetus. It is always best to discuss these topics with your doctor or midwife to get advice tailored to your personal situation.

## 1. Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is a parasitic infection that can be dangerous for the fetus if the mother contracts it during pregnancy. If you are not immune, here are the precautions to take:

- **Avoid raw or undercooked meat:** Ensure that the meat is well cooked.
- **Wash and peel fruits and vegetables thoroughly (preferably cook them):** They can be contaminated by feces from infected animals.
- **Wash your hands frequently**, especially after handling raw meat or soil.
- **Avoid changing cat litter**, as cats can be carriers of the parasite. If necessary, wear gloves and wash your hands afterward.

## 2. CMV (Cytomegalovirus)

Cytomegalovirus is a common virus that can be dangerous for the fetus if transmitted during pregnancy. It is transmitted by young children, especially those in daycare. Be cautious of transmissions through saliva and urine. To prevent infection:

- **Wash your hands regularly**, particularly after being in contact with young children, who may be carriers of the virus.
- **Avoid sharing utensils**, glasses, or food with children.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces**, such as door handles and toys.
- Pay special attention to **public swimming pools**: Public pools can be contaminated with urine.



### 3. Food Poisoning

Certain foodborne infections can be particularly serious for pregnant women and their babies. To avoid them:

- **Avoid unpasteurized dairy products** and soft cheeses (such as camembert, brie).
- **Avoid raw or undercooked eggs**, as well as dishes containing them (homemade mayonnaise, chocolate mousse, etc.).
- **Avoid raw fish and seafood**: Prefer cooked fish and ensure that the food is fresh.
- **Ensure that meat and eggs are well cooked** to avoid contamination by salmonella or listeria.

### 4. Alcohol

It is strongly recommended **not to consume alcohol** during pregnancy, as it can cross the placenta and affect the fetus's development. Alcohol can lead to serious disorders, such as fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), which affects brain development and causes mental retardation. Even small amounts can be dangerous, so total abstinence is advised.

### 5. Tobacco

Smoking during pregnancy **increases the risk of complications**, such as:

- Prematurity,
- Intrauterine growth retardation,
- Low birth weight,

Sudden infant death syndrome. It is recommended to stop smoking before or at the beginning of pregnancy. If you have difficulty quitting, talk to your doctor for appropriate support.

## 6. Drugs

Drug use during pregnancy **can have serious consequences** on the health of the mother and the fetus:

- Miscarriages,
- Prematurity,
- Malformations,
- Neurological development problems in the child. Some drugs **can also cause addiction in the baby at birth**, requiring neonatal care. It is essential to stop all drug use before or during pregnancy and seek help if necessary.

## 7. Medications

Some medications are known as "teratogens," meaning they can cause fetal malformations. Generally, in the absence of personal contraindications such as allergy, Paracetamol 1g 3x/day maximum is tolerated for headaches or pain.

However, Ibuprofen is contraindicated throughout pregnancy.

Always make it a habit to seek advice from your doctor..

## Testimonials:

*"Beautiful medical center on the rooftops of the Bascule gallery. Great location and easy parking. Very well managed and extremely well organized. Top gynecologist, psychologist, reflexologist, physiotherapist... go with your eyes closed." - Aglaé D.*



## Managing my weight gain during pregnancy

**Weight gain is a natural and necessary part of pregnancy to ensure your baby's proper development.** However, managing this weight gain in a balanced way is important to avoid complications related to excessive or insufficient weight gain. Here are some tips to help you manage your weight gain healthily:

### 1. Understand the Recommended Weight Gain

The recommendations for weight gain vary depending on your pre-pregnancy weight. Generally, healthcare professionals recommend the following:

- **Normal weight (BMI between 18.5 and 24.9):** 11 to 16 kg (24-35 lbs)
- **Underweight (BMI below 18.5):** 12 to 18 kg (26-40 lbs)
- **Overweight (BMI between 25 and 29.9):** 7 to 11 kg (15-24 lbs)
- **Obesity (BMI above 30):** 5 to 9 kg (11-20 lbs)

These recommendations may vary based on your medical situation. Consult your doctor to determine the appropriate weight gain for you.

---

### 2. Eat Balanced Meals in the Right Quantities

There is no need to "eat for two." What matters is the **quality** of the food, not the quantity. Here are some tips for healthy eating during pregnancy:

- **Choose nutrient-rich foods:** Opt for vegetables, fruits, lean proteins (meat, fish, eggs, legumes), low-fat dairy products, and whole grains.
- **Divide meals into smaller portions:** Eat 5-6 small meals a day rather than three large ones. This helps regulate hunger and maintain stable blood sugar levels.
- **Avoid empty-calorie and high-calorie foods:** Reduce consumption of sweets, sugary drinks, fast food, and processed foods.
- **Stay hydrated:** Water is essential for hydration and preventing water retention. Drink about 1.5 to 2 liters daily.

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### 3. Exercise Regularly

Physical activity during pregnancy helps limit excessive weight gain and improves overall well-being. Safe and beneficial activities include:

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- **Walking:** A daily 30-minute walk helps maintain muscle tone and control weight.
- **Swimming:** This is an excellent exercise that is easy on the joints and helps relieve weight-related pain.
- **Prenatal yoga:** It improves flexibility, reduces stress, and prepares the body for delivery.
- **Gentle stretching and strengthening exercises:** These improve blood circulation and help maintain good posture.

Before starting an exercise program, consult your doctor to ensure it is safe for you and your baby.

*Note: More detailed information about exercising during pregnancy can be found at the end of this guide.*

---

#### 4. Manage Cravings Smartly

Cravings are common during pregnancy, but managing them is key to avoiding excessive weight gain. Here are some tips:

- **Choose healthy snacks:** Examples include fresh fruits, unsalted nuts, plain yogurt, or raw vegetables with hummus.
- **Eat slowly:** This helps you listen to your body and stop eating as soon as you feel full.
- **Stay hydrated:** Sometimes thirst is mistaken for hunger. Drinking a glass of water before giving in to a craving can help manage the situation.

---

#### 5. Monitor Your Weight Regularly

It's advisable to track your weight regularly throughout pregnancy. This helps ensure your weight gain stays within recommended limits. However, avoid becoming obsessive. If you notice rapid or insufficient weight gain, consult your doctor for advice.

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#### 6. Avoid Restrictive Diets

Weight-loss diets are not recommended during pregnancy, as they can deprive your baby of essential nutrients needed for development. Excessive or insufficient weight



gain should be managed with the help of a healthcare professional who can provide personalized recommendations without risking your health or your baby's.

## Conclusion

Managing your weight during pregnancy is essential for ensuring your well-being and that of your baby. A balanced diet, regular physical activity, and moderate weight monitoring will help you experience a healthy and stress-free pregnancy. Don't hesitate to consult your doctor or a nutritionist for advice tailored to your situation.

## Useful contacts

### Practicians

Michela Formis (Nutritionniste)

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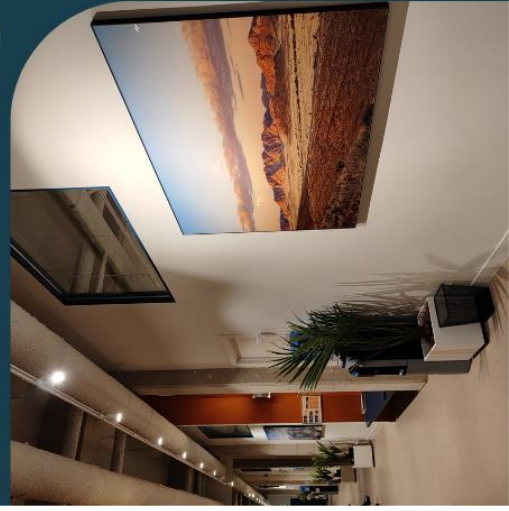
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## Childbirth Preparation

**ASPERA**  
**CARING FOR YOUR EVERY STEP**

# ASPERA MEDICAL



## Birth Plan



We encourage you to draw up your **birth plan** in consultation with your midwife. This document allows you to express your preferences regarding childbirth: pain relief method, presence of partner, delivery methods, etc. This birth plan will help you to think ahead to the day of the birth and to consider different delivery options by discussing them directly with a healthcare professional.

**Birth Plan of [Your Name]:** .....

**Expected Delivery Date :** .....

**Place of delivery [Hospital]:** .....

**Persons present at the birth :**

- Partner's name: .....
- Gynecologist: .....
- Midwife: .....

---

Childbirth preferences:

**1. Ambiance and environment:**

- Dimmed light, calm atmosphere.

.....  
.....

- Soft background music.

.....  
.....  
.....



## 2. Pain management :

- I would like to try natural pain management methods (breathing, bathing, movement, hypnosis).

.....

.....

- If needed, I am open to medication options: [e.g. epidural, anesthetic gas].

.....

.....

- I would like to be consulted prior to any pain management intervention.

.....

.....

**N.B:** if you opt for an epidural, it is difficult to mobilize, so the supine position is preferable.

## 3. In case of caesarean section :

.....

.....

.....

.....

## 4. In case of medical instrumentalization (suction cup, forceps, ...) :

.....

.....

.....

**After childbirth :**

**1. Skin-to-skin:**

- I want my baby to be placed skin-to-skin immediately after birth, unless there is a medical emergency.

.....

.....

- My partner also wishes to have skin-to-skin if possible.

.....

.....

**2. Breastfeeding:**

- I would like to breastfeed / not breastfeed / only the reception feed, as soon as possible after giving birth (cross out the unnecessary mentions).

.....

.....

- I would like to receive breastfeeding support and advice if necessary.

.....

.....

**3. Baby care:**

- Dad wishes to cut the cord? YES - NO
- I prefer to delay routine care (bathing, measuring, etc.) to promote contact with the baby.

.....

.....

- No bottle or pacifier should be given to the baby without my agreement.

.....

.....

**Other details:**

- If complications arise, I would like to be informed of every step and decision before any intervention.

.....  
.....

- My partner will be my main support, and we want to make all the important decisions together.

.....  
.....

**N.B:** *It is important to emphasize that health professionals will try to respect your wishes as best as possible, provided that your condition and that of your baby allow it. If specific procedures have to be carried out, they will always be explained to you, so that you will be fully informed.*

***Your well-being and that of your baby are their priority.***

*Your birth plan will therefore enable the health professionals who are present before, during and after your childbirth to understand your wishes as well as possible. Not everything may be possible and it will be adapted according to your progress. Share this birth plan with the midwife who will welcome you on the day of your delivery.*

**Testimonials :**

*"A passionate team, a desire to do good in beautiful surroundings ... in short, everything we expect from a medical practice in 2024! Thank you!"* **Marie D**

## Childbirth preparation



### Warning signs of labour

Recognising the signs that your baby is about to arrive is crucial to managing the onset of labour. Here are some common symptoms that indicate that labour is approaching:

- Regular contractions, less than 10 minutes apart, for at least 2 hours.
- Water breaking (rupture of the water sac).
- Unusual vaginal bleeding or discharge.

If you feel any of these signs, it is important to go to hospital immediately.

### Different ways of giving birth

**Birth without an epidural** : If you wish to give birth without an epidural, our **midwives, physiotherapists and osteopaths** will guide you in using natural techniques such as controlled breathing and birthing positions.

As there are no risks for either mother or baby, this type of birth may be ideal for you! However, certain conditions may indicate that you need more medical intervention during your labour.

Here are some explanations of **the different medical interventions during childbirth**.

#### 1. Epidural

An **epidural** is a local anaesthetic technique designed to relieve pain during labour and birth. It involves injecting an anaesthetic into the epidural space (located near the spinal cord) using a small needle. This anaesthetic blocks the pain signals from the nerves in the lower part of the body.

- **When is it used?** The epidural is generally offered to women who wish to reduce the pain of contractions during childbirth. It is administered when labour is progressing well.
- **Advantages:** It considerably reduces or even eliminates pain while maintaining consciousness and partial mobility (depending on the dose administered).

- **Potential disadvantages:** Epidurals can sometimes slow down labour or make it more difficult to push during delivery. It may also cause a temporary drop in blood pressure.

## 2. Episiotomy

An episiotomy is a small incision made in the perineum (the area between the vagina and the anus) to make it easier for the baby to pass through during childbirth.

- **When is it performed?** It is performed in specific cases, for example if the baby is in distress and delivery needs to be accelerated, or if the perineum is at risk of tearing irregularly. It is also sometimes performed when instruments such as forceps or suction cups are used.
- **Advantages:** Episiotomy allows the baby to pass through more quickly and easily, reducing the risk of severe tearing.
- **Potential disadvantages:** Recovery from an episiotomy can be longer and more painful than that of a natural tear. It often requires stitches.

*N.B.: This is not a routine procedure!*

## 3. Caesarean section

A **caesarean section** is a surgical procedure involving the removal of the baby through an incision in the mother's abdomen and uterus.

- **When is it necessary?** Caesarean section: It is indicated if vaginal delivery presents risks for the mother or the baby, for example in the event of abnormal foetal position, labour failure, foetal distress or complications related to the placenta.
- **Advantages:** Caesarean section saves the life of the baby and the mother in emergency and complicated situations.
- **Potential disadvantages:** Like all surgical procedures, Caesarean sections carry risks (infection, haemorrhage, longer recovery time). It also generally involves a prolonged hospital stay of up to 5 days.



#### 4. Forceps and vacuum

Forceps and suction cups are instruments used to help extract the baby during a difficult vaginal birth, particularly if efforts to expel the baby are ineffective, or if the baby shows signs of suffering.

- **Forceps:** These are metal spoons that surround the baby's head to help guide it out of the vaginal canal.
- **Cupping:** This is a small cup that is attached to the baby's head using gentle suction to help it pass through the vagina.
- **Potential disadvantages:** These procedures can leave temporary marks on the baby's head and lead to tears in the mother.

#### 5. Artificial rupture of membranes (Amniotomy)

Amniotomy consists of artificially piercing the amniotic sac (water breaking) with a small instrument. This procedure is performed to accelerate or stimulate labour.

- **When is it performed?** Amniotomy is performed when labour is slow, or the cervix is not dilating sufficiently. Amniotomy can help to intensify contractions.
- **Advantages:** It can speed up the birth process and, in some cases, is necessary to monitor the baby's well-being more closely.
- **Potential disadvantages:** As an amniotomy cannot be reversed, it should only be performed if labour is imminent.



# ASPERA

Caring for Every Step



*It's the  
Big Day*

## The day of Delivery



### Arrival at the Clinic

When you arrive at the hospital, a midwife will welcome you and guide you to the labor room. We will conduct an examination to assess the progress of labor and check your baby's health.

Don't forget to discuss your birth plan with a midwife upon arrival.

### During Labor

A hospital midwife will accompany you throughout the labor to ensure everything goes smoothly. We provide natural pain relief methods as well as an epidural if you choose. Your gynecologist will be kept informed of your progress and will arrive shortly before delivery.

## Essential Items to Bring to the Maternity Ward for the Day of Your Delivery

### For the Mother

#### 1. Administrative Documents :

- Identity card or passport
- Health insurance card
- Pregnancy medical file
- Birth plan (if you have one)

#### 2. Clothing:

- 2-3 front-opening nightgowns or pajamas for easy breastfeeding
- A bathrobe or dressing gown
- Comfortable socks and slippers
- Comfortable underwear and disposable maternity briefs (suitable for post-birth protection)
- Nursing bras (if you plan to breastfeed)
- Loose, comfortable clothes for discharge (practical and easy to wear)

### 3. Personal Hygiene:

- Postpartum sanitary pads
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, moisturizer)
- Lip balm (hospital air is often dry)
- Bath towel and washcloths
- Hair ties or headbands

### 4. Personal Comfort:

- Nursing pillow (optional but useful)
- Water bottle with a sports cap
- Snacks (dried fruits, energy bars)
- Headphones or books for relaxation
- Phone charger and camera (if you want to capture the first moments)

---

## For the Baby

### 1. Clothing:

- 3-4 bodysuits (short or long sleeves, depending on the season)
- 3-4 pajamas
- Hat, mittens, and socks
- A small jacket or onesie for going home (depending on the season)
- A warm blanket for transport

### 2. Hygiene:

- Newborn diapers (although the maternity ward usually provides some)
- Hypoallergenic wipes
- Baby care products (diaper cream, moisturizing lotion)
- Soft baby towel

### 3. Other Essentials:

- Car seat (mandatory for transporting the baby home)
- Comforter or stuffed animal for first bonding (optional)

---

## For the Partner

### 1. Comfort Essentials:

- Change of clothes and toiletries
- Snacks and drinks
- Phone, charger, and possibly a camera

---

## 2. Contact List :

- Phone numbers of family and friends to inform after birth

---

### Additional Suggestions

- Small change for vending machines or to buy newspapers/drinks.
- Notebook and pen to jot down questions for the medical staff or important information.

Depending on the maternity hospital, some supplies may already be provided, so don't hesitate to check directly with your gynecologist/hospital.

---

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**Most importantly, enjoy this extraordinary moment! Childbirth is an incredibly powerful experience! You have prepared for this, you can do it, and you will be amazing parents! It's normal to make mistakes, but we are here to help, listen, and guide you if needed.**

**Believe in yourself and your journey.**

**We wish you all the best in this new chapter of your life!**

### Testimonials:

*"Booking an appointment was easy, the reception was warm, and the doctor I consulted was excellent. Next time, I'll try their physiotherapy services!" – Valériane M.*

---

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# Postnatal Care at Aspera



ASPERA  
Caring for Every Step

## Postnatal Care at Aspera



### ***Taking Care of the Mother After Childbirth***

*After your baby's birth, we ensure that you recover well. Our midwives visit you regularly to check on your health, manage postpartum pain, and assist you with breastfeeding if desired.*

- **Postnatal Follow-up:** *Don't forget to schedule a postpartum check-up with your gynecologist six weeks after delivery. This visit will assess your health and include a transvaginal ultrasound.*
- **Home Visits:** *You are entitled to **10 home visits** (covered by your health insurance) from your midwife during your baby's first year. Aspera's midwives will be happy to continue supporting you at home.*
- **Perineal Rehabilitation:** *Pelvic floor rehabilitation is essential after childbirth. Our physiotherapists offer sessions to strengthen your perineal muscles and prevent urinary leaks, available in **group or individual** sessions.*
  - ***Postnatal physiotherapy** is essential one month after birth and is conducted in **small group classes** (max. 5 patients), including **intensive abdominal massage**.*
  - *A **pelvic floor check** is included in an individual session.*
  - *During the first month postpartum, we strongly recommend wearing **postpartum shapewear** or compression shorts (e.g., SweetBirth) throughout the day to protect the **pelvic floor and abdominal muscles**.*
  - *Contact us to register for **group classes or individual sessions**.*
- **Psychological Support:** *The postnatal period can be emotionally challenging. Our **psychologists** are available to help you navigate baby blues or other emotional difficulties.*



### Care for Mother & Baby

- **Pediatric Visit:** A check-up with a pediatrician is recommended **10 days after birth**. Your baby's first **vaccines** are given at **2 months** and can be administered directly at Aspera.
- **Osteopathy for Babies:** A visit to a **pediatric osteopath**, at **6 weeks old**, is recommended to help your baby's muscles and joints recover after birth. The birthing process puts a lot of pressure on a baby's body, and **osteopathy can provide relief**.
- **Osteopathy for Mothers:** Pregnancy and childbirth cause significant changes in a mother's body. Our **specialized osteopaths** offer sessions to relieve **postpartum muscular and joint pain, improve posture, and ease recovery**. A **gentle approach** helps rebalance the body after this intense period.

### Breastfeeding Support

If you choose to breastfeed, there are different **techniques and approaches** to help make it a **comfortable and intimate** experience with your baby. Our **healthcare professionals** are here to guide you through **workshops and consultations**.

### Nutrition

A **balanced diet** is essential for supporting your body's postpartum recovery, especially if you are **breastfeeding**. Our **nutritionists** will help you make the right dietary choices to boost your **energy levels** and **support optimal recovery**. **Personalized advice** can help you regain vitality while taking care of your baby.

### Sexology

After childbirth, many parents have questions about **resuming intimacy**. Our **sexologists** provide **compassionate guidance** to help you navigate this transition. They will help you understand the **physical and emotional changes** that occur after birth and **reconnect with your sexuality** at your own pace.

## Naturopathy

For those seeking **a natural approach**, our **naturopaths** offer complementary solutions to **support postpartum recovery**. Using **herbal remedies, homeopathy, and relaxation techniques**, our experts help restore your **overall well-being** and strengthen your **immune system**.

## Useful contacts

Practitioners	
Michela Formis (Nutritionniste)	Salomé Levy (Psychologue Clinicienne)
Joy Sarot (Naturopathe & Reflexologue)	Patrick Bensen (Psychologue TCC)
Pedro Mondaca (Kinésiologue)	Carolina Geymonat (Psychologue Clinicienne)
France de Sadeleer (Sexologue)	





ASPERA MEDICAL

Administrative Checklist for  
Parents-to-be in Belgium



# Administrative Checklist for Parents-to-be in Belgium



The arrival of a child in Belgium requires several administrative steps before and after birth. Here is a summary to help you organize all the necessary formalities.

## Before Birth

### 1. Declare Your Pregnancy to Your Health Insurance (Mutuelle)

**When:** As soon as your pregnancy is confirmed by your doctor or midwife.

**To do:**

- Send your **pregnancy declaration** to your health insurance provider (*mutuelle*) to activate **prenatal care reimbursements** and access **maternity leave benefits** (for self-employed individuals) or a **birth grant**.
- Request your **pregnancy certificate** from your doctor.
- If you have **hospitalization insurance**, check that it covers pregnancy and childbirth costs.

### 2. Maternity/Paternity Leave Requests

**When:** As soon as you inform your employer about your pregnancy.

**To do:**

- For the **mother**: Send a medical certificate with the expected due date to your employer. You are entitled to **15 weeks of maternity leave**.
- For the **father/partner**: Inform your employer to benefit from paternity leave (**10 days within 4 months after birth**).
- Contact **ONEM** (National Employment Office) to check your entitlement to maternity/paternity leave benefits.

### 3. Pre-register for a Nursery (Crèche)

**When:** As early as possible. A pregnancy certificate is issued at **12 weeks (SA)**.

**To do:**

- Contact nearby **nurseries** for registration conditions and submit a **pre-registration file**.
- Look into **alternative childcare options** such as registered childminders, communal nurseries, or private daycare centers.

### 4. Apply for the Birth Grant

**When:** From 24 weeks of pregnancy.

**To do:**

- Contact your **family allowance fund** to apply for the **birth grant**, a one-time financial aid granted before or after the birth.
- This organization will also manage your **monthly family allowances** after birth (varies by region: Wallonia, Brussels, Flanders).

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## After Birth

### 1. Register the Birth at the Commune

**When:** Within **15 days after birth**.

**To do:**

- Go to the **town hall** where the baby was born with:
  - Birth certificate issued by the hospital or midwife.
  - Parents' identity cards.
  - Marriage certificate (if applicable).
- The town hall will issue a **birth certificate**, required for other administrative steps.

### 2. Register Your Baby with Your Health Insurance (Mutuelle)

**When:** As soon as you have the birth certificate.

**To do:**

- Send a copy of the birth certificate to your health insurance (mutuelle) so your baby is covered for medical expenses.

### 3. Register Your Baby with the Family Allowance Fund

**When:** As soon as your baby is born.

**To do:**

- Notify your family allowance fund to start receiving monthly family allowances (amounts vary based on Wallonia, Brussels, or Flanders).

### 4. Enroll Your Baby in Complementary Health Insurance

**When:** Just after birth.

**To do:**

- Contact your mutuelle or private insurance to include your baby in hospitalization and general healthcare coverage.

### 5. Confirm Nursery Registration

**When:** Shortly after birth, depending on the nursery's policy.

**To do:**

- Finalize the registration by providing the **required documents** (birth certificate, vaccination record, medical certificate if needed).

### Within Weeks after Birth

#### 1. Request a Family Record Book (Livret de Famille)

**When:** After registering the birth.

**To do:**

- If you don't have a family record book, the town hall will provide one when registering the birth.
- If you already have one, your baby's name will be added.

#### 2. Choose a Pediatrician or Family Doctor

**When:** As soon as the baby is born.

**To do:**

- Schedule a check-up with a pediatrician or general practitioner for ongoing health monitoring.
- Register the doctor as your baby's designated physician with your mutuelle for higher reimbursement rates.

#### 3. Vaccinations & Medical Check-ups

**When:** From **the first months** after birth.

**To do:**

- Contact the Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance (ONE) (Wallonia & Brussels) or Kind en Gezin (Flanders) to schedule:
  - Mandatory vaccinations
  - Growth monitoring
- These services are free and provide essential early childhood care.

#### 4. Apply for a Baby's ID Card or Passport

**When:** As soon as possible, especially if you plan to travel.

**To do:**

- Request an ID card or passport for your baby at the town hall with:
  - A passport photo of your child
  - The birth certificate

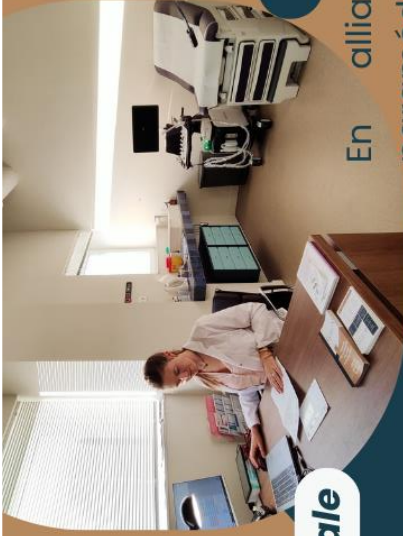
### Autres démarches utiles

- **Update Your Insurance Policies**

Inform your home, life, and health insurance providers about your child's birth to adjust your coverage.

- **Legalizing Family Status (for unmarried couples):** If not married, ensure you have legally recognized the child at the town hall before or after birth.

***N.B: This checklist is not exhaustive. Be sure to verify and complete all the necessary steps for your situation.***



## Equipe Médicale



**Dr. Iphigénie de Selliers**  
Gynécologue & Fondatrice Aspera



**Pr. Caroline Kadji**  
Gynécologue Obstétrique



**Dr. Agathe Bridier-Petit**  
Gynécologue



**Dr. Fabian De Smedt**  
Gynécologue Sénologie & chirurgie



**Dr. Salomé Oleksiak**  
Médecin Généraliste



**Dr. Solange de Wouters**  
Orthopédiste pédiatrique

## Introduction

En alliant le médical, le paramédical et des médecines alternatives, Aspera s'efforce de répondre à toutes les aspirations et préoccupations de ses patients.

Nous proposons, en plus de notre offre de soins, des:

- Guides Médicaux en libre accès
- Des ateliers et formations
- Des cours collectifs
- Des conférences
- Des informations médicales
- ... et bien d'autres



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## Equipe Paramédicale



**Cassandre Calvet**  
Ostéopathe D.O.



**Danilo Mazzoni**  
Kinésithérapeute



**Sandrine Machado**  
Ostéopathe D.O.



**Ivy Duong**  
Kinésithérapeute



**Patrick Bensen**  
Psychologue TCC



**Salomé Levy**  
Psychologue Clinicienne



**France de Sadeleer**  
Sexologue  
Thérapeute de couple



**Carolina Geymonat**  
Psychologue Clinicienne



**Michela Fornis**  
Nutritionniste



**Olivia Delloye**  
Nutritionniste



**Zoé Hermant**  
Sage-femme



**Jalna Gistelincx**  
Kinésithérapeute (cours de rééducation collectifs)



**Pedro Mondaca**  
Kinésologue



**Joy Sarot**  
Kinésologue



## Which Sports Can I Do During Pregnancy?



Staying Active During Pregnancy: It's Possible and Beneficial!

Whether you're in your first or last trimester, staying active during pregnancy can help you feel better, improve circulation, and prepare your body for childbirth.

### Recommended Activities

- **Walking** – Light, accessible, and perfect for gentle movement !
- **Swimming** – Relieves back pain and improves circulation without straining the joints.
- **Prenatal Yoga/Pilates** – Stretching, relaxation, and gentle preparation for childbirth.
- **Stationary Cycling** – Great cardio workout while minimizing the risk of falling!
- **Gentle Dancing** – Keep moving while having fun.
- **Light Strength Training** – Maintain muscle tone safely with light weights.

### Activities to Avoid During Pregnancy

- **High-impact sports** (skiing, horseback riding, scuba diving, etc.)
- Sports with a **risk of falls or impacts** (mountain biking, basketball, etc.)
- Exercises **lying flat** for long periods

### Remember These Key Points

- **Consult your doctor** before starting a new physical activity during pregnancy.
- **Listen to your body** – If you feel pain, excessive breathlessness, or dizziness, stop immediately and consult a healthcare professional.
- **Stay hydrated** and avoid excessively hot environments.

💡 Moderate exercise during pregnancy offers **numerous benefits** for both mother and baby, helping prevent gestational diabetes, improving blood circulation, and promoting overall well-being.

*N.B: Before starting any activity, discuss it with your doctor for personalized advice.*

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## Postnatal Physical Therapy

- ✓ **Essential one month after childbirth**, postnatal physical therapy is offered in small group classes (max. 5 participants) with an intensive abdominal massage.
- ✓ A perineal check-up is included in an individual session.
- ✓ During the first month after birth, it is **highly recommended to wear a postpartum support belt** or compression shorts (such as SweetBirth) throughout the day to protect the pelvic floor and abdominal muscles.

Contact us for group class registration or individual sessions.

# ASPERA MEDICAL CENTER

## Guide to Antenatal and Postnatal Care



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