

# Getting Ready for Childbirth

## What to Do First

- ❑ Choose where you want to have your baby. (Read “Where You Can Give Birth” at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).)
- ❑ Choose a health care provider. (Read “Types of Health Care Providers” at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).)

## How to Get Ready

- ❑ Get regular **prenatal** care from your health care provider.
  - Follow the provider’s advice.
  - Get answers for your questions. (Read “Talking with Your Health Care Provider” at [www.HealthyLearn.com](http://www.HealthyLearn.com).)
- ❑ Read books on pregnancy and childbirth.
- ❑ Take a childbirth class, if you can.

## Childbirth Classes Do These Things

- ❑ Tell you what happens when you give birth

- ❑ Show you and your partner (or other “coach”) what to do during labor and delivery
- ❑ Help lessen the fear of giving birth
- ❑ Teach you how to work with the natural birthing process. You can do this through:
  - Exercises that make the muscles used in childbirth stronger
  - Massage
  - Focusing the mind
  - Relaxing and breathing methods
- ❑ Help explain what happens with a **Cesarean section** (C-section). Knowing what to expect is helpful when a C-section is planned. It is helpful, too, if it is not planned, but needs to be done for the safety of you and your baby.

You can find out about childbirth classes from:

- ❑ Your health care provider
- ❑ The maternity department of local hospitals
- ❑ Local education programs
- ❑ Local March of Dimes

