

The Family Childbirth and Children's Center

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get to Mercy?

- Please follow the link below for driving directions to Mercy Medical Center:
<https://mdmercy.com/locations-directions-and-parking/parking-facilities?itemId=7661098742954764B25090E63ED71507#7661098742954764B25090E63ED71507>

Where should I park when I come to the hospital?

- The best place for patients and visitors to park is in the Bunting Garage, located off of Pleasant Street. Try to resist parking on the street or another garage. If you do, you will undoubtedly need to move the car at a bad time. It's the only garage open 24 hours a day. The Bunting Garage is connected to the hospital via bridge on level 4. Please be sure you get a parking validation ticket for the discounted price, hourly fees apply.
- There are two other parking garages connected to our other buildings that close around 9 pm Monday through Friday.
- Valet parking is also available Monday through Friday 7:00 am- 7:00 pm.

What if I want to transfer my care to Mercy? How do I get started?

- Please visit the link below to view all of the Mercy Doctors and Midwives, their office locations and phone numbers. Call early in your prenatal care and ask about transferring your care. You will need to authorize your former provider to transfer your medical record.
- <https://mdmercy.com/centers-of-excellence/womens-health/family-childbirth-and-childrens-center/our-doctors/obstetrician-gynecologists-ob-gyn>

What if I feel too uncomfortable to walk from the garage into the hospital?

- Most of the time women are comfortable enough to walk from the garage to Labor and Delivery. It actually helps the labor to progress a little. If that isn't the case, it is fine to pull up to the Bunting Circle (345 St Paul Place). Security will put you in a wheelchair and take you to triage while your partner parks the car and meets you there.



How many people can come with me? What is the current policy?

- As of now, Mercy is not allowing any visitors except for in Pediatrics and Maternal Child Health. You may have one visitor during your stay. It must be the same person throughout your stay. Professional support staffs such as doulas are currently being considered as visitors.

Am I allowed to have a professional support person as well as my visitor?

- At this time, Mercy is only allowing one support person per patient.

What are the sleeping accommodations for visitors?

- There is a reclining chair and a sleep sofa in each room for visitors to use. Mercy has plenty of pillow and blankets for visitor use.

What are visiting hours?

- Visiting hours are currently 24 hours a day in Labor and Delivery, the NICU and the Mother Baby unit. Only one visitor is allowed. Visitors must be over 18 or the parent of the newborn.

Is there valet parking available?

- **Valet parking** is available at the main entrance of The Bunting Center, located at 345 St. Paul Place, Monday - Friday, from 7 am - 7 pm. The fee is \$10, up to 24 hours if your valet ticket is stamped. If not stamped the fee is \$30.
- Valet parking is also available at McAuley Plaza, located at 301 St. Paul Place, as well as The Weinberg Center, located at 227 St. Paul Place.

How much does parking cost?

- **Self-park** fees at The Bunting Garage for validated patient and visitor tickets:
 - First 30 minutes: Free
 - 30 minutes - 1½ hours: \$ 5.00
 - 1½ - 5 hours: \$ 7.00
 - Over 5 hours: \$11.00
- **Payment** - Patients and visitors who self-park have two payment options:
 - Cashier* - Pay at the booth when exiting the garage.
 - Pay-N-Go kiosk* - Pay at the kiosk and then exit the garage without stopping at the cashier. Patients and visitors have one hour to exit the garage. The Bunting Garage Pay-N-Go kiosk is located on Level 4. The cashier and Pay-n-Go kiosks accept all major credit cards as well as cash.
- **After Hours Parking** (Nights and Weekends): The Bunting Garage is the only Mercy garage that accommodates after hours parking.



Should I stop at the emergency room before going to Labor and Delivery?

- Unless you are coming by ambulance, it is better to go directly to the 8th floor Bunting building where Labor and Delivery is. Going to the Emergency room first will cause a delay in your care.

What can I eat while I'm in labor?

- While you are in labor, you will be allowed to have clear liquids, which means: ice, popsicles, juice, ginger ale, broth and tea. We will provide those things for you. If you decide to get an epidural, you will be limited to just ice chips at that time.

Will the hospital supply food and beverages for my visitor?

- The hospital usually does not provide food and drink for visitors. It is important to pack food and drink for your support person. Many times partners do not want to leave to get food and drink and they end up not eating and drinking through the labor. This can sometimes result in fainting episodes.

What will I be given to eat after the baby is born?

- If you deliver during mealtimes, the kitchen will bring you a hot tray. You will not get to pick what you are having unless you have a dietary restriction on your chart. After that, you will be given a menu and you may pick what you want for each meal. If you deliver at night time, they will have a lunch box with a sandwich, fruit and chips. It's not very fancy, but most everything tastes wonderful after having a baby. Your tummy has so much more room!

May I bring my own food from home? May I order take out while I'm here?

- Sometimes people want to have something more special after delivery and they bring their own food from home. The nurses can label it and put it in the fridge for heating up later. The Corcaran Café is another option. It is open from 6:30 am to 8:00 pm and then again from 12 midnight to 2:00 am. People also like to order take out. If you order out, please direct the delivery to the new building, 345 St. Paul Place. Your visitor can go down to the glass doors to pick up the food.

Where are the ATM machines/ vending machines in the hospital?

- There are two ATM machines in the hospital. The first is located in the Bunting Lobby and the other is in the McAuley lobby by the gift shop. There are vending machines in the Emergency room entrance and also on the Mother Baby Unit (only accessible while you are staying there).

Do I need to pre-register to deliver at Mercy?

- There is no need to preregister. Your electronic medical record holds all of your information and is shared between your prenatal care provider, the Center for Advanced Fetal Care and Labor and Delivery.



Do I need my photo ID and insurance card?

- Yes, upon arrival to Labor and Delivery, you will be asked to present your photo I.D. and insurance card.

Where do I go if I am coming in for a scheduled procedure like an Induction or C-section?

- If you are coming in for a scheduled procedure, like a C-section or an induction, you will go directly to the 8th floor registration area. The charge nurse will come out and take you to the room that is reserved for you. Rarely, the Labor and Delivery unit will need to reschedule your procedure due to there being no available beds to reserve for you. In this case the charge nurse will call you at home a few hours before your scheduled appointment.

Will I go to triage before I get admitted?

- When you think you are in labor, if your water breaks, or if you feel that something might not be right, you should call your prenatal care provider first for advice. If you are told to come to Labor and Delivery, you will go directly to the 8th floor registration area. The triage nurse will come to get you within 10 minutes. Most people go to triage, but some will bypass triage if their water is broken or they look to be in very active labor.

How many triage beds does Mercy have? What happens when they are full?

- If the triage area is full when you arrive, you will be given an assessment, assigned a level of acuity, and placed back in the waiting area until a space opens up. Sometimes you might notice that someone who got there after you went in before you. Their level of acuity was higher. Please maintain social distancing while in the waiting room. If there is not enough space, please let the registration clerk know that you are in the NICU waiting area. The NICU waiting area is much larger and has a bathroom. It is located directly across the elevators.

What happens in triage?

- In triage, you will be placed on the fetal monitor in order to assess the pattern of your baby's heart rate and your contraction pattern. Your vital signs will be taken. The midwife will do some testing depending on your situation. Some of the tests done in triage would be a urine check, vital signs, vaginal exams, speculum exams to check for rupture of membranes and/or infection and an ultrasound assessment.

Will my doctor or midwife be at the hospital when I come?

- There will always be at least 1 provider in the hospital from the Hoffman Group. The Metro Group, Dr. Apple and Dr. Taylor take turns covering Labor and Delivery for each other.



How is Mercy keeping patients and visitors safe from possible infection from the COVID-19 virus?

- With the exception of Maternal Child Health, Mercy Medical Center is not allowing any visitors into the hospital presently. Pregnant patients and new mothers may have one visitor. Babies in the NICU may have one visitor. We are screening all employees, patients and visitors before allowing them into the hospital. The screening consists of a temperature check; questions about coughing, sneezing, or respiratory difficulty; questions about travel in the last 14 days and questions about exposure to known infected persons. Employees, patients and visitors who do not pass the screening test may not enter unless they are going to the Emergency Room or Labor and Delivery. Patients with symptoms are asked to wear a mask and are taken straight away to isolated rooms with proper ventilation. Between patients, all rooms and equipment is cleaned in accordance with CDC guidelines.

What should I bring from home? Should I bring my birthing ball? Should I bring my car seat in?

- You may bring freshly laundered clothing. Expect to go home in maternity clothes or something very baggy. It takes a while for the uterus to get back to its prepregnant size. Mercy will provide basic necessities, but mothers often prefer to bring their own. Mercy will provide everything related to perineal care, bottle feeding and breastfeeding. While you may like to bring your own aromatherapy and blue tooth speaker for music during labor, it is not necessary to bring a birthing ball. We have lots of balls, in different shapes and sizes. You do not need to bring your car seat into the hospital unless the nurses ask you to.

How can I tell if I am really in labor?

- During the last few weeks of pregnancy, you may experience what is known as Practice Labor. This is when you have contractions that are irregular and not very long or strong. The contractions eventually fade away. Try to remember the “511” when you are wondering if you are in labor. If contractions are 5 minutes apart, they last for at least a minute and that has been going on for at least an hour, then you are probably in real labor. Contractions should be strong enough that you can’t laugh or talk during them. Practice labor usually goes away if you do something different, like take a shower or a walk. Real labor doesn’t stop no matter what you do.

If my nurse is not in my room, how will she know if one of my alarms is going off?

- Patients often worry that their nurse will not know if an alarm is going off in their room. Both the NICU and L&D are equipped with Central Monitoring. This means that all of the nurses and doctors can see every alarm from any computer.

How many birthing rooms does Mercy have? How many rooms have tubs?

- Mercy’s L&D has 16 private rooms, 3 with Jacuzzi tubs, 2 Operating rooms and 3 PACU rooms.



When is it too late to get an epidural?

- An epidural will be available at any time during labor as soon as the anesthesiologist is available. It is advised that you let your nurse know as soon as you start thinking that you are ready for an epidural. That way, we can coordinate the anesthesiologist's time. It is also advised that you receive your epidural, if wanted, during active labor (before you are 8 centimeters). Often when women change their mind during the last part of the labor, the baby is born by the time we get the epidural placed and working.

Does Mercy have walking epidurals? Laughing Gas?

- At this time Mercy does not have Walking Epidurals or Laughing Gas. We offer analgesia in the form of IV or IM injections. We also offer epidurals.

How many rooms are there in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit?

- Mercy's NICU is different from the traditional style NICU; all of our 23 rooms are private rooms. Each room has a sleep couch and a rocking chair. One parent can spend the night. Visiting hours are 24 hours a day, 1 person at a time. Visitors must be over 18 or be a parent of the NICU patient. Every visitor is required to do a special hand scrub before entering the unit to minimize germs.

What if my labor turns into a C-section? Where do I go then?

- There are two operating rooms in the Labor and Delivery unit. If it becomes recommended that your baby be born by C-section, you will take a ride on your bed to the operating room.

Do I have to have an IV?

- Yes, all patients are required to have an IV during labor and the initial post-partum period. You may request to have intermittent IV fluids rather than continuous IV fluids. This will give you more mobility during labor. If you have intermittent IV fluids, you must remember to keep yourself well hydrated during labor.

Do I have to stay on the fetal monitor all the time? Will I be free to move around my room? The hallways?

- All patients will go on the fetal monitor upon arrival to Labor and delivery. Most patients stay on the monitor throughout their labor. If you would like more mobility, you may request to have intermittent monitoring or use of the telemetry unit. The telemetry unit is a device that can send a radio signal to your fetal monitor while you walk in the hallways or in your room.



What if I want to keep my placenta?

- If you would like to keep your placenta, it will still go to pathology for inspection. After pathology has finished with it, they will call the charge nurse and let her know that is ready for pick up. This usually takes about 24 hours. You will be called and your partner may bring a cooler to Labor and Delivery for transportation of the placenta to your home.

Is delayed cord clamping done at Mercy?

- Delayed cord clamping is standard at Mercy, even during C-sections and even for preterm babies. Delayed cord clamping is only done if the newborn is showing no signs of distress.

Can I donate my baby's cord blood and do delayed cord clamping?

- There is, unfortunately, not enough blood left in the umbilical cord after delayed clamping for donation.

Does Mercy practice encourage Skin-to-Skin? Why is Skin-to-skin so important?

- Mercy encourages Skin-to-Skin. Skin-to-Skin helps regulate your baby's blood sugar levels and temperature. It promotes bonding and breastfeeding. Stimulating your baby's tactile sense (the sense of touch), encourages brain growth and neurological development. Mothers and their partners are encouraged to do Skin-to-Skin often in the first few weeks of life.

What will you do to my baby immediately after birth? What kind of medications, screening tests and procedures are done to babies in the hospital?

- Immediately after birth, your baby will be placed on your chest and encouraged to cry. The nurse may use a bulb syringe to help clear way some of the amniotic fluid in the baby's mouth. After about an hour of Skin-to-Skin, your baby will be weighed and measured. Your baby will be given two identification tags which are identical to the bands they will give you and your partner. They will make a set of footprints for your baby and place your finger print on the same paper. They will make a set of footprints as a keepsake for you. Two medications are usually given in the birthing room. The first is Erythromycin ointment in the eyes which helps prevent infection from coming through the birth canal. The other medication is the baby's first shot, vitamin K. Vitamin K helps us to clot our blood. We make it in our digestive tract. Newborns hardly have anything in their digestive tract and are therefore vitamin K deficient. You will be offered the first of 3 Hepatitis B vaccines for your baby while you are in the hospital. Three screenings tests will be done before you go home: a metabolic screening test, a hearing screening and a basic heart check.



How will my pediatrician receive information about my baby's health? If my pediatrician has privileges, may he/she visit the baby in the hospital?

- Babies are seen by the house staff and all information will be sent electronically to your pediatrician. During the COVID outbreak, only Mercy employees will be allowed to care for your baby.

How long do I stay in Labor and Delivery until I go to the Mother Baby unit?

- Mothers and babies are usually kept on the labor and delivery for about 2 hours after delivery.

How long is the typical hospital stay for a vaginal birth? A C-section?

- Your insurance will cover 48 hours of stay after a vaginal birth. If that 48 hours runs out and it is not a good time for discharge, you will not be charged extra, but be discharged the following morning around 10 am. Sometimes people want to go home as soon as possible after delivery. The minimum time of stay is about 24 hours after a vaginal delivery. Mothers who have a C-section will stay between 3 and 5 days after delivery, depending on how quickly they begin to show signs of recuperation.

Does Mercy practice Rooming In?

- Mercy does practice rooming in. This means that your baby can stay in the room with you during physicals, baths, screenings and assessments. The only time your baby will need to go to the nursery is if he/she needs closer observation or a procedure such as circumcision is being done.

May I go out into the Mother's Garden while I am a patient?

- The garden is open to patients and visitors during daylight hours. Mothers may not go onto the garden while they are in labor, but any other time it is permitted. This is a nice place for visitors to rest or for you to get some air if your baby is staying in the NICU.

What kind of support can I expect to receive from the Lactation Consultants and nurses if I am breastfeeding? What about after I go home?

- The lactation consultants and nurses will work with you closely throughout your stay. There will be a lactation consultant on staff every day while you are here. After you go home, you may call the lactation warm line 410.332.9060 for assistance. Occasionally, if the consultant cannot help you over the phone, they will have you and the baby return to the mother baby unit for a free consult.

Will Mercy start processing my baby's birth certificate and social security card?

- Yes, the Birth Registrar will come to your room and collect the information needed for your baby's birth certificate and social security card.



What is an Affidavit of Parentage? Why is it important?

- If you are not legally married, The Affidavit of Parentage is a very important document which gives both parents legal rights to the baby. It is a long document which must be witnessed by the Birth Registrar when it is signed.

Will there be photography services while I am at the hospital?

- Photography services are currently not being offered due to the Covid-19 virus.

Can my partner go in the operating room with me if I have a C-section?

- Unless there is a true emergency and you need to be placed under general anesthesia, your partner will be given appropriate attire and be allowed to accompany you to the operating room.

Do I need to bring anything for my baby?

- Whether you are breast or bottle feeding, Mercy will provide everything that you need for the baby during your stay. You will want to bring appropriate clothing for your baby to go home in.

When should I have my car seat installed?

- It is a good idea to get your car seat installed by the time you are about 34 weeks pregnant. It can be a simple thing, like adding a latching clip to your seat belt. Or, it can be more complicated, like taking the car to the dealer to have hardware installed. Once you have your car seat in place, you will want to practice adjusting the straps ahead of time.
- Please follow the link below to find locations for car seat inspection:
<https://www.nada.org/CustomTemplates/GeneralPage.aspx?id=21474839128>

Will my baby be separated from me during my stay at Mercy?

- Unless you or your baby are having complications, you will be kept together, even if you have a C-section.

If I have a C-section, will I be able to do Skin-to-Skin in the operating room?

- Yes, as long as you and your baby are both doing well, you will be offered Skin-to-skin in the operating room. We will get breastfeeding started upon arrival to the recovery room, which is usually about a half an hour after the baby is born.

