

# Prenatal pediatric consultation in low-risk pregnancies

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The pediatrician's first contact with the patient and family should occur before birth, ideally during the last trimester of pregnancy, through prenatal consultation. This first meeting helps build a bond of trust, allows for preparation, guidance, and support for the family, provides an opportunity to dispel doubts, and offers educational tools on the care and management of the newborn.

As the person responsible for the care and support of children, adolescents, and their families, pediatricians play a crucial role in preventing illness and promoting health, even long before pregnancy. Prenatal consultations are a unique opportunity to encourage breastfeeding and safe sleep practices, prevent unintentional injuries, and learn about family history that may be important in monitoring the baby's health.<sup>1</sup>

Despite its importance, this is not a common practice in our setting. Therefore, it is essential to call on healthcare specialists and those who support the family during pregnancy to promote this enriching practice. This will help the family approach birth with adequate, evidence-based knowledge and information, allowing them to anticipate the arrival of the new member.

The objectives of prenatal consultations are to establish a positive and trusting relationship with the pregnant woman and her family, gather

information about the current pregnancy and fetal health, inquire about relevant maternal history, monitor for vertically transmitted infections, assess parental expectations and the family situation, and identify risk (situations of bereavement, substance abuse). It is also crucial to understand the mother's cultural values and her wishes regarding the birth, and to encourage support throughout the birth process.

At this stage of the consultation, the practices that will be performed on the newborn, from the delivery room to discharge from the maternity ward, should be explained.<sup>2,3</sup> Other topics to be addressed include aspects of parenting, initial care, hygiene, and healthy habits (breastfeeding, feeding, safe sleeping, etc.), immunizations, and any other concerns that may arise during the consultation.<sup>1,3,4</sup>

This consultation should take place in a safe and trusting environment for the family, as the pediatrician is expected to accompany the child throughout their growth and development. It is therefore essential to establish a bond that fosters comfort, conveying peace of mind and providing them with the space they need to ask questions without feeling that their questions are inappropriate or trivial.<sup>5</sup>

Aware of the importance of this issue, the

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Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría. has just presented its *Guide for prenatal consultation of low-risk pregnancies*<sup>6</sup> to provide pediatricians with information to develop a properly organized prenatal interview, with the main aspects to consider and their corresponding rationale, based on the best available evidence. ■

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