

For Immediate Release

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**Tanner Women's Care, Community Partners Launch 'Better Birth Days' Campaign
To Keep Region's Moms and Their Babies Safe and Healthy**

Just in time for Mother's Day, Tanner Women's Care and several community partners are launching a new effort to keep moms and their babies safe and healthy.

The new public awareness campaign, "Better Birth Days," will provide education on the potential life-threatening health risks and complications for moms during pregnancy, delivery and postpartum — especially among Black and Latina women.

Tanner is partnering with the Carroll County Health Department, the Pregnancy Resource Center, first responders and the faith-based Black and Latina communities — among other organizations — to reach more at-risk moms and their loved ones to build awareness of these risks and the importance of immediate medical intervention to save lives.

The outreach leverages Tanner's extensive care footprint in the region, the expertise and passion of its medical team for caring for moms and their babies, and an extensive network of existing community relationships established through Tanner's Get Healthy, Live Well to improve health outcomes in the communities Tanner serves.

"Pregnancy, birth and postpartum complications, like pre-eclampsia, blood clots and strokes, can occur in any woman — including those under a doctor's care — and we know Black and Latina moms face a higher risk. The death of one mom is one too many," said Megan Grilliot, MD, a board-certified obstetrics and gynecology specialist with Tanner Healthcare for Women. "A woman who is aware of her risks and understands the importance of prompt medical attention is better prepared and likely to have a better outcome."

A Growing Maternal Health Concern

National, state and local statistics indicate a growing maternal health concern, according to Dr. Grilliot:

- Pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births almost doubled between 1987 and 2017 in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Georgia has the second highest rate of deaths of mothers from pregnancy-related complications, with 48.4 deaths per 100,000 live births.
- In Georgia, Black mothers are six times more likely to die during childbirth or the 12 postpartum months that follow versus Caucasian mothers.

Symptoms to Watch For

Dr. Grilliot advises pregnant or new moms — and those who love them — to be alert to the symptoms that signal potentially life-threatening complications and seek immediate medical attention at their closest emergency department. These symptoms include:

- A headache that won't go away or gets worse over time

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain or a rapid heart rate
- Severe swelling, redness or pain in a leg or arm
- Changes in vision
- Dizziness or fainting

“Women are vulnerable to potential complications during pregnancy and the 12 months that follow,” said Dr. Grilliot. “New moms are often so focused on their newborns and the demands of feeding, diapering and perhaps caring for older siblings, too, that they may overlook symptoms they are experiencing that can signal trouble and require immediate attention. These serious, life-threatening conditions do not go away if ignored. Prompt intervention saves lives. Mothers need the support of their partners, other mothers, grandmothers and friends to make sure they recognize when they might be in trouble.”

Information for Better Birth Days will be available in both English and Spanish, provided to community partners like the Carroll County Health Department, the Pregnancy Resource Centers in Carrollton and Haralson counties, and Baby Braves in Heard County. Materials will also be available at Tanner locations to facilitate outreach.

The Carroll County Health Department will provide Better Birth Days materials in information bundles for women with newly confirmed pregnancies as they identify their healthcare providers for their prenatal, delivery and postpartum care and sign-up for maternity and children’s benefits.

“Information is power for these women who are just beginning their pregnancy journey and are anxious to make the right choices to keep themselves and their unborn babies safe and healthy,” said nurse manager Cindy Moore, RN, with the Carroll County Health Department. “Better Birth Days is consistent with our mission.”

The Pregnancy Resource Center also believes the program will help more women achieve healthy pregnancies, deliveries and post-partum recoveries.

“Reaching pregnant moms early in their pregnancy is critical to helping them understand how to care for themselves throughout their pregnancy and beyond,” said Karmen Stamps, executive director of the Pregnancy Resource Center. “We will leverage Better Birth Days materials in our interactions with expecting and new moms to make them aware of potential risks and what they need to do, so they can enjoy many happy birthdays with their babies.”

Watch the Better Birth Days video: <https://youtu.be/5UZSkhf Id0>

Learn more about Better Birth Days now: tanner.org/better-birth-days

Learn more about Tanner Women’s Care. <https://www.tanner.org/womens-care>

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Suggested Photo Captions:

#1:

Pregnancy is an exciting time for moms, who can be distracted from their own health while caring for a new baby. Some moms can face potentially life-threatening complications such as high blood pressure and blood clots. Awareness and prompt medical attention are critical.

#2

Black and Latina moms face greater risks of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Tanner is partnering with community organizations, including the Georgia Department of Health, Pregnancy Resource Center and first responders, to reach moms and their loved ones with important information on symptoms, risks and the importance of prompt medical attention.

#3

Tanner is working to deliver better birth days for all moms and their babies with a public information campaign to educate moms and loved ones on potentially life-threatening complications during pregnancy and up to 12 months following childbirth.

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