make a better decision when you’re not rushed.

BUY LINES: LAYETTE

Buying clothes and supplies in preparation for your new baby is exciting. But with so many products to choose from, making decisions may be confusing. Practical selections for baby’s layette are best.

Clothes designed for easy changing are ideal. Soft, absorbent fabrics that can be machine washed and dried are a must.

Baby’s basic wardrobe will depend on where you live and the time of year. A baby born in spring or summer will not need heavy blankets and sleepers. If your home is comfortably heated in the fall or winter, layers of light clothing will keep baby warm. Baby needs to be kept warm, not hot. Perspiration and skin rash may develop if your baby is kept too warm.

Babies grow rapidly and therefore outgrow their clothes in about three months. You will have to decide whether it is more practical to buy fewer items and wash more often or buy more clothes and wash less frequently. Many parents have found the following items useful:

- knit shirts
- stretch play/sleepers
- kimono’s or gowns
- receiving blankets
- socks or booties

Proper laundry care is needed to help clothes last longer. First, remove stains before laundering. Soak formula and diaper stains in a mixture of 1 quart lukewarm water, 2 teaspoons detergent, and 1 tablespoon ammonia for 15 minutes. Rinse with water then soak in 1 quart warm water and 1 tablespoon enzyme product for 30 minutes before washing.

For more information, contact your County Extension Service office.
BABY’S GROWTH
Your baby is now at least two-thirds grown, and you will be able to feel her moving and kicking inside your uterus. Baby is getting exercise by kicking and stretching!

CAR SAFETY SEATS
Car crashes are the number one killer of children. One of the most important items you’ll need for your baby’s trip home from the hospital is an approved car safety seat. Car seats are specially designed to protect an infant’s body and head from injury should a crash occur. Do not attempt to hold your baby in your lap while riding in a car. If the car were to stop suddenly, your arms would not be strong enough to keep your baby from flying through the windshield.

A rear-facing, softly padded car seat is a must before your baby is born. Some hospitals and health departments lend car safety seats. Plan to use one on every trip. Georgia has a law requiring the use of approved car safety seats for children under the age of 3.

Three-year-olds must be protected by a car safety seat or safety belt. Children from age 4 through 17 must use a safety belt. Two types of seats are available for babies:

• infant-only seat
• convertible seat that faces the rear for infants and forward for children who weigh 20 pounds or more and are at least 1 year old.

Both types of seats are safe when used according to the manufacturer’s directions. If you have questions about car safety seats, call 1-800-342-9819.

REMEMBER NUTRITION
Although good nutrition during pregnancy does not guarantee a problem-free pregnancy, it definitely reduces your risk of complications. Your diet is something that you can control — something only you can do to keep you and your baby well on your way.

Continue eating plenty of protein foods like meat, milk, cheese and dried beans. Also eat lots of fruit, vegetables and whole grains to ensure you get all the vitamins and minerals you and your baby need.

CHILD CARE
It’s never too early to start looking for day care if you will be needing it. Consider the following:

• What kind of care suits you and your baby’s needs? Do you prefer a caregiver who comes to your home? Or would you prefer to take your baby to the caregiver’s home? This is called family day care.
• Many parents choose day care centers. However, some centers do not accept infants.

Day care centers must be licensed by the state. This will help ensure that the minimum health, safety and staffing requirements are being met.

Whether or not the caregiver you select is licensed, you are responsible for making sure your baby gets the care you expect. Drop in from time to time. Get to know your caregiver personally.

Can the caregiver provide the special individual care your baby needs? Each adult caregiver should care for no more than three or four infants.

Each type of child care has advantages and disadvantages. Family day care often provides more personal care for infants and may be available nights and weekends. On the other hand, caregivers may decide to give it up without prior notice, leaving you without childcare. Centers may be more reliable, but as the number of children increases, the risk of spreading infections may increase and overall care may decrease.

Don’t wait until you need child care to find it. Many caregivers have waiting lists. Also, you are more likely to