



## General Recommendations

- Be encouraged that being pregnant is a healthy, normal life process for women. Most pregnancies, even normal ones, have a variety of discomforts - constipation, heartburn, etc. We give you tips to minimize them, but don't be alarmed if your body feels and behaves differently than it does when you're not pregnant.
- Don't believe everything you hear! Labor stories are like fishing stories - they get more dramatic with each telling. Don't let the stories scare you.
- Miscarriages are common; one in 5 (20%) of all pregnancies result in miscarriage. However, be reassured that once a fetal heart rate is established it is unusual to miscarry, approximately 1 in 100.
- Everyone carries differently; you may appear too small or too big to another woman. But don't let that upset you - trust your own body.
- Take a birthing class. The more you understand, the less anxious you are. Reducing anxiety reduces pain.
- Use common sense to maintain your wellness: wear a seatbelt.
- Get plenty of rest - your body is working very hard! Aim for 7-9 hrs every night.
- Wash your hands, especially after going to the bathroom, handling raw meat and before eating.
- Set limits. As much as you can, control the stress in your life. Don't be afraid to say "no" to requests for your time and energy.

## Diet, Nutrition and Weight Gain

- Your diet should be high in protein and lower in fat and sugar, with plenty of whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables. Simple carbohydrates are not good for you or the baby, so be careful of too much white bread, pasta, potatoes or rice. If you want seconds, think vegetables before dessert.
- Your ideal weight gain is probably between 20-35 pounds, depending on your height, weight and body type. Remember: 2/3 of your weight gain will occur in the second half of your pregnancy.
- Drink at least 6-8, 8 ounce glasses of fluid a day. Avoid sodas and high sugar juices - drink water instead. It does not cause swelling.
- You have been given a prenatal multi-vitamin that has iron, folic acid and calcium. You may take additional vitamins if you wish. However, Vitamin A and D can be dangerous if too much is consumed.
- Moderation is the key word; an occasional cup of coffee will not hurt you or the baby.

## Bathing

- It is safe to take baths and swim. Be careful getting in and out of the tub or pool.
- Avoid very hot baths; they can make you light-headed.
- Avoid hot tubs, saunas and jacuzzis.

## Dental Health

- Use good oral hygiene to control your risk of gum diseases. Pregnant women may have changes



in taste and develop red, swollen gums that bleed easily. Brush with a soft toothbrush and floss at least 1-2 times a day.

- Dental work during pregnancy is safe. Make sure you get your regular dental checkups done and have all needed dental treatments.
- Let your dentist know that you are pregnant and how far along you are.
- You might feel uncomfortable sitting in a dental chair for long periods during the last months, so try to schedule appointments between the 14th and 25th week.



### **Hair Dying**

The limited evidence that's available suggests that it's safe to dye your hair during pregnancy. That said, you may want to consider waiting to color your hair until the second trimester, when your developing baby is less vulnerable.

### **Activity**

- Exercise is important during pregnancy. Prenatal yoga or other stretching classes designed for pregnancy can be very beneficial for reducing the discomforts of pregnancy, making childbirth easier and helping you recover from pregnancy and childbirth.
- Attempt to continue your normal level of activity. Extreme fatigue suggests that you are attempting too much - so scale back.
- Hydration is very important - drink plenty of water before, while and after exercising.
- Take care of your back. Use your legs to pick things up by squatting and keeping your back straight.
- Pregnancy is not the time to acquire new athletic skills.
- Avoid "high-risk" activities, like horseback riding, water skiing, SCUBA diving and skiing.
- Aerobic exercise is great, however, keep your heart rate below 140. Exercise machines are fine also, but increase reps, not weight.
- Avoid sit-ups and other exercises where you are lying flat on your back.
- Most pregnant women can work right up until the time they go into labor. If this becomes a problem please let us know.

### **Travel**

In most cases, it is fine to travel while pregnant. Check with your provider if you are unsure. Most airlines request you don't fly or may require a doctor's note to fly after 36 weeks - at that point it's a good idea to be staying close to home and your provider in case you deliver anyway. However you travel, make sure to get up, walk around and stretch every 1-2 hrs.



### **Sex**

- You can have sex until the day you deliver - if you can figure out how! It does not hurt the baby



- Your provider will tell you if there are conditions that develop in your pregnancy that mean you should avoid sex.
- If you have bleeding during or after sex you should contact your provider
- Sex does not cause miscarriages nor does it put you into labor. It may however, give you contractions late in the pregnancy, which usually subside. It may also give you a discharge from your breasts.
- Because exposure to sexually transmitted infections during pregnancy increases the risk of infections that can affect the pregnancy and your baby's health, use a condom if your partner has a sexually transmitted infection, you're not in a mutually monogamous relationship or if you choose to have sex with a new partner during your pregnancy.
- It is good to wait 4-6 weeks after childbirth before resuming sexual intercourse to give your body time to heal. When you are ready to have sex take it slowly and use a reliable method of contraception to prevent another pregnancy.

### **What to report to your health care provider**

Tell him/her about anything that concerns you or that you don't understand.

Let us know about any of the following symptoms:

- Excessive swelling
- Baby not moving
- Persistent pain or headache
- Fever greater than 101 degrees
- Vaginal bleeding
- A gush of fluid from your vagina
- More than 6 contractions in 1 hr

