



## PREGNANCY HELPFUL HINTS

### ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Avoid alcoholic beverages, cigarettes/tobacco/nicotine and street drugs completely.

### ANIMALS

- Don't change cat litter – this could potentially expose you to a virus called toxoplasmosis.
- Wear gloves while gardening

### BOWELS

#### To Avoid Constipation

- Drink 6-8 glasses of water per day.
- Eat plenty of fiber-rich foods, such as raw fruits and vegetables, whole grains, high-fiber cereal, bran, high-fiber granola bars and cooked dried beans (you can also supplement with Metamucil, Fibercon, etc.)
- A stool softener (MiraLax, Colace or Duclolax) may be taken as needed. These are over the counter medications.
- If constipated, ok to use Milk of Magnesia.

#### Diarrhea

- If severe, stay on clear liquids for 24 hours and call if you have a temperature greater than 101°
- Kaopectate OR Immodium AD may be used (**NO PeptoBismol**).
- If symptoms persist for longer than 48 hours, contact our office.

#### Hemorrhoids

- Anusol Suppository
- Tucks Pads
- Preparation H Ointment OR Suppositories
- Warm tub soak for 20 minutes at least twice a day
- Avoid hard stool by using the items listed in the "To Avoid Constipation" section.
- Do not strain during a bowel movement.

#### Gas

- Avoid gas forming foods like cabbage, onions, and spicy foods.
- Tums or Gas-X may be used as needed.

### CAFFEINE

- Limit caffeinated beverages such as regular coffee, tea, and cola to no more than 1 to 2 cups a day.

### COLDS

- Increase fluids
- Rest
- Sudafed, Tylenol, Vicks', DayQuil, Mucinex, Benadryl, Chlor-Trimeton, Claritin, and Claritin D can be used as directed.

#### Nasal Congestion

- Vaporizer
- Chlor-Trimeton Decongestant or Tylenol Sinus
- Ocean Nasal Spray
- Afrin Nasal Spray if Ocean Nasal Spray is not adequate to relieve symptoms.

### Sore Throat and Cough

- Gargle with warm salt water
- Throat lozenges
- Tylenol Pain Reliever
- Robitussin
- Call if you have a temperature greater than 101°

### Headache

- Extra strength Tylenol – PLEASE DO NOT TAKE Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aspirin products (these can affect the blood supply to the baby)
- Ice packs/cold wash cloth around back of neck and forehead
- Caffeine
- Hydration and rest
- Rest in a dark room
- Call the office for headaches that do not get better with rest and Tylenol.

## **CRAMPS**

### Uterine

- Due to the fetal growth and position, twitching and stabbing pains may be felt at various times, especially during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy. You may try Tylenol, rest, and increasing your fluid intake to minimize discomfort.
- If the contractions are regular, painful, or you have bleeding, **go to Labor and Delivery.**

### Leg

- Support hose
- Increase Calcium, Potassium, and fluid intake.

## **DENTAL CARE**

- We recommend dental check-ups at the beginning of pregnancy.
- If there is a need for a root canal as indicated by your dentist, check with your doctor first.
- Local anesthesia is okay, but **NO GAS.**
- X-rays are okay as long as your abdomen is protected by a lead apron.

## **EDEMA (swelling of hands and feet)**

- Increase water intake by 3-4 more glasses per day.
- Elevate your feet above heart level in the evenings, and elevate feet as much as possible during the day.
- Decrease salt intake, soda pop, and other sodium containing foods.
- Light exercise (walking)
- Refer to a low sodium diet.
- Swelling in the face, accompanied by headache, increased blood pressure, or abdominal pain needs to be evaluated.  
**Go to Labor and Delivery.**

## **EXERCISE**

- Exercise is safe and even encouraged during pregnancy.
- As with anytime you exercise, drink plenty of water and eat a healthy diet.
- Wear clothing that is comfortable.
- You may jog/run, especially if it has been your normal practice prior to pregnancy. It's preferable to run during morning or later evening hours to prevent dehydration and overheating, particularly during the summer.
- Avoid exercising flat on your back.
- Crunches are okay up to 16 weeks – use an exercise ball under your back.

- Pregnancy specific yoga, aerobics, or water aerobics are recommended. Swimming is also a good form of exercise during pregnancy.
- Stop exercising when you are tired.
- Changes that occur in your body shape and size during pregnancy will limit the types of exercise you can do safely as your balance changes.
- Avoid any type of exercise that can cause even mild trauma to the abdomen. **No High Impact Sports (skiing, four-wheeling, soccer, football, basketball, etc.).**
- If you have any concerns regarding an exercise program, speak with your physician prior to starting.

### INDIGESTION/GAS/ACID REFLUX/HEARTBURN

- Avoid spicy foods
- Drink a glass of milk before eating meals
- Try small amounts of Maalox or Mylanta before eating if milk doesn't work.
- Do not use baking soda and water
- Chew gum
- Tums Antacid, Zantac, Prevacid, Pepcid, and Gas-X are acceptable over the counter medications.
- **Don't eat or drink 1-2 hours before lying down.**

### LABOR

- Contractions should be every five minutes lasting, 40-60 seconds, and feel like bad menstrual cramps.
- You may leak amniotic fluid and blood tinged discharge.
- When in doubt, **go to the hospital** and they will notify the doctor of the situation.

### NAUSEA/MORNING SICKNESS

- Eat soda crackers before getting up each morning.
- Eat six small meals per day
- A combination of UNISOM 25mg and VITAMIN B6 25mg can be taken morning and evening. Be aware that the UNISOM can make you drowsy.
- Over the counter Sea Band Bracelets.
- For severe nausea, there are prescription anti-nausea medications available.
- Ginger

### PAINTING

- Only paint in well ventilated areas
- Paint only if necessary
- Use latex paint only. **No oil based paint.**

### SEAFOOD

- Limit ALL seafood to 6oz portions, 2 times weekly (includes canned tuna and other fish)

### SKIN IRRITATIONS

- For mild skin irritations, you may use topical creams such as Benadryl Cream or Hydrocortisone Cream. Call the office if no relief of symptoms in 2 days or for severe cases.

### SLEEP

- If you have trouble sleeping, you can take over the counter medications such as Unisom, Tylenol PM, or Benadryl as needed.
- Speak to your provider if the above medications are not helping

## **SPOTTING**

- Bed rest for 24 hours with hips elevated on a pillow.
- If cramping is associated with the bleeding, please call the office. It is normal to have a small amount of spotting if you have had intercourse in the last 2-3 days. Bleeding as heavy as a period is not normal. If you are less than 20 weeks, **go to the Emergency Room**. If you are more than 20 weeks, go to Labor and Delivery.

## **TRAVEL**

- After 7 months, you need consent from your physician to travel by air.
- When traveling by air, book an aisle seat.
- If traveling by car, stop every hour to get out and walk around. This will help prevent blood pooling and leg cramping.
- It is safe to take over the counter Dramamine.

## **WEIGHT GAIN – DIET**

- Discuss appropriate weight gain with your provider

## **PLEASE AVOID THE FOLLOWING:**

- Saunas
- Hot Springs
- Hot tubs
- Tanning beds

## **YOU MAY:**

- Use self-tanning cream
- Have manicures and pedicures
- Have maternity massages
- Perm and color your hair in a well-ventilated area (a perm usually does not take due to the hormones of pregnancy).