

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS DURING YOUR PREGNANCY

### 1. What do I do if I think I have a temperature?

If you think you have a fever, you need to take your temperature with a thermometer and call our office if it above 100.4 degrees.

### 2. Can I go to the dentist while I am pregnant?

It is very important to take good care of yourself when you are pregnant. Dental health is very important also. You need to make sure that you visit the dentist to maintain your oral health. There are certain things that we want the dentist to know. Local anesthesia is okay and so are the pain medicines that are on our list. You may get x-rays but they need to shield your abdomen while taking them. If you have anything besides a routine visit which is teeth cleaning, please call our office. If your dentist requires a letter before your visit, please call our office BEFORE your scheduled visit so we can get the letter ready for you.

### 3. Can I get X-Rays while I am pregnant?

If you need x-rays during your pregnancy, you need to tell the x-ray technician that you are pregnant BEFORE they do the x-ray. A shield for the abdomen will be provided during the x-ray procedure.

### 4. How much weight should I expect to gain during my pregnancy?

Every woman experiences pregnancy differently, but most women can expect to gain about 5 pounds in the first trimester or first 12 weeks. Most normal weight women gain anywhere from 24-35 pounds during the pregnancy.

### 5. I am always tired, what can I do about that?

Fatigue during pregnancy is normal. There are ways that you can make sure that you are taking care of yourself so that you do not feel as tired. Make sure that you are getting plenty of rest. If you feel tired, take a break and rest. Make sure that you are eating a well balanced diet. Eating the right foods will help you feel better. A diet with lots of sweets and carbohydrates can make you feel more tired. Do not overdo it! Make sure that you take care of yourself!

### 6. What can I do about breast tenderness?

Breast tenderness is normal during pregnancy. To help minimize the tenderness you need to wear a good supporting bra, such as a maternity or nursing bra. Full-figured bras also offer more support.

### 7. How can I prevent my legs and ankles from swelling?

You cannot keep your legs and ankles from swelling but you can do things to make it better. Make sure that when you are sitting that you elevate your legs. Your feet should ideally be higher than your heart. An easy way to do this is to sit in a recliner or on the couch with your feet propped up on the armrest. You need to avoid standing for long periods of time. Wear loose clothing, especially at the wrist and ankles. Limit your intake of salt. Reduce or avoid foods that are high in salt, such as bacon, lunch meat and potato chips. If you are having swelling in your face and hands, please let your doctor know.

8. I am constipated. What can I do to help prevent that?

Many pregnant women seem to have problems with constipation. One reason for this may be changes in the hormones that slow the movement of food through the digestive tract. Sometimes iron supplements also cause constipation. During the last part of your pregnancy, pressure on your rectum from your uterus may add to the problem. Here are some suggestions that may help:

- Drink plenty of liquids, at least 6-8 glasses of water each day. You should also include 1-2 glasses of fruit juice such as prune juice. Liquids that contain caffeine such as coffee, tea and colas should be avoided. These caffeinated drinks pull water from your intestines and make your stool harder and more difficult to pass.
- Eat foods that are high in fiber such as raw fruits and vegetables and bran cereals.
- Exercise is another way to help. Walking daily can help with constipation.

9. What can I do if I have hemorrhoids?

Hemorrhoids during pregnancy are often caused by constipation. They occur because you have been straining during bowel movements. Having hard stools can also make the hemorrhoids worse and can cause them to protrude from the rectum. To help with relief of hemorrhoids or to avoid the problem you can eat a high fiber diet and drink plenty of liquids. Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time. Do not strain with bowel movements. Take a warm sitz bath to help relieve any pain. You can use Tucks pads or Anusol suppositories. If these things do not relieve your symptoms, please call our office.

10. What can I do for a backache?

Backaches are expected during pregnancy. As you get bigger, you will experience more back pain at times. You can help to minimize your back pain by avoiding doing too much and getting too tired. You need to practice good posture. Wear low-heeled shoes. When you are resting, elevate your legs on pillows. You may take Tylenol for pain. You may use a heating pad only on your back. Do not place the heating pad on your stomach.

11. Are leg cramps normal?

In the last three months of pregnancy, you may find that you have more leg cramps. Get plenty of calcium, at least three glasses of milk a day. Get plenty of potassium which you can get from oranges or bananas. You can stretch your legs before you go to bed to help relieve cramps. When exercising or stretching, avoid pointing your toes. Do not sit for long periods of time or cross your legs when you are sitting.

12. Sometimes I get dizzy. What should I do?

Make sure that you are eating a well balanced diet. Do not skip meals. Make sure that when you stand up, that you do it slowly. If your dizziness continues, please contact our office.

13. Is it normal for my gums to bleed during pregnancy?

During pregnancy, the extra hormones in your body may cause your gums to swell and bleed. Floss and brush regularly, using a soft bristle toothbrush, to keep your teeth in good shape. Have regular dental check ups.

14. Is it safe to paint during pregnancy?

Latex paints manufactured before 1991 used small amounts of mercury as a preservative. There was some concern that this mercury could present a health hazard, so mercury is no longer used in latex paints. The fumes from latex paints are not felt to be a specific risk to a developing baby, but it is always a good idea to paint in a well ventilated area. The fumes from oil-based paints, turpentine, paint thinner, and other paint products are best avoided by pregnant women. Also remember when painting to avoid use of a ladder to reduce the risk of injury due to a fall.

15. Can I perm or color my hair while pregnant?

There is no evidence to suggest that hair color or permanents are harmful during pregnancy. We recommend that you wait until after the first trimester to color or perm your hair. Please know that your hair may not perm well during the pregnancy.

16. Are saunas, hot tubs and tanning booths safe during pregnancy?

The use of saunas, hot tubs and tanning booths is not recommended in pregnancy. The extreme temperature could potentially damage the developing baby. Extremely hot baths are not recommended during pregnancy. Bath temperatures should be below 100° Fahrenheit.

17. What is Pica?

Pica is a rare craving to eat things other than food, such as ice, dirt, clay, baking soda, corn starch, and sheet rock. Eating these foods that do not contain nutrients can cause low iron anemia. If you are craving these foods, please let your doctor know. If you are craving ice, try freezing fruit juices or fruits to eat instead of ice. These things do have a nutritional value.

18. What is this brown mask on my face?

Due to changes in hormone levels, including the hormones that stimulate pigmentation of the skin, brown, blotchy patches may occur on the face, forehead or cheeks. This is often called the mask of pregnancy or chloasma, and often disappears soon after delivery. Using sunscreen when you are outside can reduce the amount of darkening that occurs. Other places that the skin pigment can change are the areas surrounding the nipples, called the areolas. A dark line frequently appears down the middle of the abdomen, called the linea negra, also.

19. Is it normal for my nose to bleed or to be congested during pregnancy?

During pregnancy, the lining of the respiratory tract receives more blood, often making it more congested. This congestion can also cause stuffiness in the nose or nosebleeds. Also, small blood vessels in the nose are easily damaged due to the increased blood pressure, causing nosebleeds. You can use saline nose spray to help alleviate congestion. You can also use a cool mist humidifier to help with congestion or nose bleeds.