

Frequently Asked Questions

Morning Sickness-Nausea and vomiting are pretty common. Get plenty of rest and try to avoid smells that bother you during this time. Eat several small meals. Avoid spicy and fatty foods. If you cannot keep any foods down call our office.

Smoking - Do not smoke in pregnancy. It causes small babies, premature birth and/ or bleeding.

Alcohol- Do not drink alcohol in pregnancy. No research is available indicating how much alcohol does not jeopardize the fetus. Many women have inadvertently had alcohol early in pregnancy without subsequent problems for the baby, but the best policy is none while attempting pregnancy and certainly once pregnancy is known.

Travel- You may travel until 34-36 weeks. Check with your airline to determine if you need a note from your doctor before your flight. If you will be spending time outdoors do not forget to use sunscreen.

Diet- Your goal weight gain during your pregnancy is 25-35 pounds. Watch what you are eating and avoid junk foods. Minimize your use of sweeteners, such as NutraSweet and Splenda.

- Caffeine. Minimize your use to 1-2 cups of caffeine products per day (coffee, tea, chocolate, coke)
- Fish. You may eat up to 12 ounces (2 average meals) per week of fish low in mercury (e.g. salmon, shrimp.) Canned light tuna has less mercury than albacore. Avoid shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish.
- Cheese/ Meats. Avoid foods that are high risk for listeria infection including hot dogs, deli meats (okay if reheated to steaming), soft cheeses, pates or meat spreads, unpasteurized milk or milk products, raw or undercooked meats and fish.
- Water. Drink 4 quarts of water a day.

Exercise- Regular exercise (at least 3 times a week, monitoring heart rate if it may be greater than 140) helps prevent gestational diabetes and decreases your risk of postpartum depression. Recommended activities include swimming, elliptical or stair machines and yoga. Avoid high impact and abdominal exercises. Do not do activities that can cause falling or heavy contact. No scuba diving but snorkeling is okay. Walking, jogging and cycling are fine although they may become increasingly uncomfortable later in pregnancy. Avoid exercises while lying on your back after 12 weeks. Do not exercise to exhaustion. Drink lots of water while exercising.

Constipation- Constipation is common throughout pregnancy. Start by increasing fiber in your diet (fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grain breads, high fiber cereals.) Increase your water intake to 4 quarts daily. Blood in your stool may be a sign of straining or hemorrhoids- notify us at your next visit or sooner if symptoms worsen.

Hot Tubs- Avoid saunas, steam baths, hot tubs (over 100 degrees), and electric blankets as they may be harmful to the fetus' neurological development.

Cats- Avoid changing cat litter.

Hair Dye- There is no evidence suggests any fetal effects.

Lying on Back- Avoid lying flat on your back after the first trimester. The pressure of the uterus can decrease blood return from your legs. If you feel nauseated or light headed after lying flat on your back; move slightly to your side to shift your uterus.

Headaches- Headaches are fairly common in pregnancy. You may take 2 plain or extra strength Tylenol every 6 hours. If your headaches are one sided or associated with blurred vision, please call the office.

Painting- Latex painting is generally safe in pregnancy. Use in a well ventilated room. Avoid using a sprayer. Avoid lead and oil based paints.

Side Pain- Many women experience side pain during pregnancy, especially when exercising, stretching or lifting. This is usually ligament pain caused by a growing uterus pulling on the ligaments. For relief, you may use heat, rest, Tylenol or massage.

Heartburn- Indigestion and heartburn are very common in pregnancy. Please see the list of OTC medications.

Vaginal Discharge- It is normal to have thicker vaginal discharge. Do not douche in pregnancy. If you leak clear watery fluid, call the office.

Fetal Movement- Expect fetal movement around 20-24 weeks. After 28 weeks, make a “mental note” of daily fetal movement. You should feel your baby move at least 12 movements a day. Easy times to monitor for movement are at bedtime, (lying on your left side) or just after a meal. If you feel less than 12 movements in a day, please call the office.