Common Questions and Concerns Regarding Pregnancy

Pregnancy can bring about many questions and concerns, especially in the first few months. You may find variations of advice from all of the different sources available to you. In order to help guide you through some of the common prenatal issues, we have complied the list of our practice’s recommendations below. If you have any additional questions not answered here please do not hesitate to contact us.

- We encourage a healthy diet for our pregnant patients. The education packet provided at your OB physical (at 9-10 weeks’ gestation) will review nutrition, weight gain, and exercise. You may do a light exercise program. Walking is an excellent exercise for pregnant women. If you are currently doing heavy exercise, please review your routine with your care provider.

- If you smoke, we strongly recommend that you quit. Smoking during pregnancy can affect your baby’s growth rate, especially the lungs, and cause its heart rate to rise, in addition to many other things. Smoking during pregnancy also increases your risk for miscarriage and delivering prematurely. Family members, especially the father of the baby, need to follow our recommendation to quit smoking as well, and whenever possible you need to stay away from any second-hand smoke. This is because people who passively breathe in smoke are at the same risk of disease and infection as actual smokers. An infant living in a household with a smoker is at an increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), as well as chest, ear, nose and throat infections. Those infections can then develop into even more serious conditions such as bronchitis and pneumonia.

- Prenatal vitamins are important to take daily. Any over-the-counter vitamin labeled as “prenatal” is acceptable. You do not need a prescription for special prenatal vitamins. Some find it best to take prenatal vitamins at night with a snack to avoid stomach upset. If your nausea is severe you may try taking two Flintstones Chewable Vitamins with a folic acid supplement instead of the prenatal vitamin. Once your nausea fades you should begin taking the prenatal vitamin again.

- Limit your caffeine intake to a maximum of two caffeinated beverages per day.

- We advise our patients to attend childbirth classes, especially if they are first-time moms. You will receive information regarding class schedules and registration information later on.

- You may see your dentist as needed. We do not restrict treatment for dental work. If x-rays are needed, please ask them to shield your abdomen.

- You may color/highlight your hair.

- Sexual intercourse is fine as long as your doctor has not instructed you to avoid it.

- If painting, avoid oil-based paints, make sure that you are in a well-ventilated room, and do not climb on ladders.

- Travel during pregnancy is fine, except after 36 weeks. At that point you could quite possibly deliver and thus need to stay close to your physician and St. Joseph Regional Health Center.

- We strongly encourage you to breastfeed your newborn. Information on the benefits of breastfeeding for both you and your baby will be provided to you later on in your care. In order to support you we have an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) on staff. She is available to meet with you during pregnancy if necessary and after delivery of your baby.