

PREGNANCY PEARLS FOR MOMS TO BE

Nutrition: Eating for two does not mean doubling your intake, 300 extra calories should be sufficient for average sized patients with average activity. Avoid junk food and drink 8-10 glasses of fluids a day. Ideally the urine should be clear not yellow. Weight gain should be 25-35 lbs total with approximately 10 lbs gained in the 1st 20 wks and 1lb a week thereafter.

Exercise: Exercise is important in building stamina, strengthening muscles for labor and delivery, improving posture and maintaining sense of well-being. You should exercise and continually be able to speak in full sentences and if you are sweating, you are working too hard. Your heart rate should not exceed 140 bpm for more than 15 min. and avoid activities that might cause falls.

Substance Abuse: Avoid alcohol in all forms during pregnancy to decrease the risk of fetal abnormalities including cranio-facial, limb, cardiovascular, and growth defects. Expectant mothers who smoke tend to have low birth weight infants with an increased perinatal mortality, as well as an increased of SIDS. Avoid recreational drugs and any medication except Tylenol.

Sexuality: sexual activity is not contraindicated as long as it is mutually desired, unless advised otherwise. The baby is well protected by the uterus and bag of waters. Avoid douching. Continue wearing seat belts low and snug throughout pregnancy.

Dental Hygiene: Good dental hygiene, regularly brushing and flossing promotes the safety of the pregnancy and may prevent preterm birth and infections

Avoid **cat feces** to decrease risk of Toxoplasmosis.

Avoid raw meat/game and unpasteurized dairy products to decrease risk of Listeria. Warning signs and symptoms: Bleeding, abdominal pain, pain with urination.

Prior to 12 Weeks

Fetal Development: Length - 1 in. Weight - less than an ounce at 12 weeks.
Heart begins to beat by the 25th day.

Changes to expect: Fatigue, frequent urination, morning sickness, heartburn, breast changes, skin pigment changes, mood swings, misgivings.

8-12 WEEKS

Fetal Development: Length - 2.25 in. Weight - .5-1 oz.

Facial features are forming. Eye and ear structures are at a critical time of growth.

Changes to expect: "morning" sickness. Weight gain 1-2 lbs. Waist and breast size increases.

Vaginal discharge becomes thicker, whiter and stickier. Less energy for you.

16 WEEKS

Fetal Development: Length - 2.5 in. Weight - 4 oz.

Ears, arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet and toes formed this month.

Changes to expect: Less morning sickness. Weight gain 2-3 lbs. Food aversions, cravings.

Emotional instability- very moody at times.

Recommend- walking, swimming or biking for 15 minutes daily.

Note on calendar when patient first feels baby move 2 days in a row.

17-20 WEEKS

Fetal development: Length - 10 in. Weight - 3/4 lb. Fetal movement will usually be felt this month. Baby begins a growth spurt. Hair appears on its head. Kidneys begin to make urine.

Changes to expect: Pregnancy is beginning to show. Improved appetite. Weight gain - about 1 lb. a week. Cravings for some foods may be felt. Less fatigue.

You should learn and practice Kegel and pelvic rock exercises, lie down and put your feet up at least 30 min. each day, and talk about what the baby will be like and about your new responsibilities with your partner.

Make a note of baby's first movements if they have not already occurred.

21-24 WEEKS

Fetal development: Length - 12 in. Weight - 1.5 lb. Fetal movement increases. Baby's skin is red, wrinkled and protected from the amniotic fluid by a white, cheesy coating called vernix.

Changes to expect: Expectant moms tend to feel better during this middle part of the pregnancy. Breasts grow larger and softer.

Suggested weight gain - about 3/4 lb per week.

This is time to find a childbirth class that will teach breathing and relaxation techniques, Think about breast vs. bottle feeding

25-28 WEEKS

Fetal development: Length - 15 in. Weight - 2.5 lbs. Fingerprints forming. Eye lids open and close.

Changes to expect: Tightening/relaxing of uterine muscles (Braxton- Hicks contractions). Stretch mark on hips, abdomen, and breasts. Increased worry about outcome.

Talk about childbirth experiences with other parents, start collecting things for the baby's first few weeks, obtain information on breast and nipple care and learn to recognize the signs of labor, warnings signs in late pregnancy (headache, sudden increase in swelling, abdominal pain, leakage of fluid, bleeding).

29-32 WEEKS

Fetal development: Length - 16 in. Weight - 3 lbs. Fine soft hair called lanugo covers the baby. The brain and nervous system are growing rapidly.

Changes to expect: Weight gain is faster because this period is when the baby's greatest growth period begins. Kicking may be felt in pt's ribs.

You may feel clumsy and tire easily and may feel pelvic bones loosening during ambulation.

Think about the birth experience and discuss any plans with your physician

Items to consider: fetal monitoring, anesthesia/analgesia, episiotomy, complications, C- section and tubal ligation. Prenatal classes will provide a tour of the hospital as well.

33-36 WEEKS

Fetal development: Length - 18 in. Weight - 5.5 lbs. Eyes are open. Skin is smooth because fat is being deposited.

Changes to expect: This may be the most uncomfortable month. Vaginal secretions may increase. Practice relaxation techniques during Braxton- Hicks contractions. It's time to obtain an infant car safety seat.

37-39 WEEKS.

Fetal development: Length - 20 in. Weight - 6.5-7.5 lbs. Fetal movement may seem decreased because there is less space to move in the uterus.

Changes to expect: Braxton-Hicks contractions are more frequent. Your breathing improves and there may be pressure low in the pelvis as the baby's head drops into pelvis. Hands and feet may swell.

Only 5% of patients deliver on their due date. A pregnancy may go up to two weeks overdue without problems.

Its now time to limit of out of town travel to no further than 2 hours distant and only if you are not contracting.

It's time to consider postpartum birth control methods.

Remember to call for contractions that are 3-4 minutes apart and making you concentrate hard to get through each of them. Your suitcase should be packed.

One of the best ways to track of a healthy baby is to notice its movements. Healthy babies are very active, particularly in the evening after supper. Make a habit of counting the baby's movements (kicks, turns, flips) in 1 hour. If the baby moves more than 10 times in an hour, then you may stop counting until the next day. If the baby is not moving 10 times in two hours then drink some sugared juice and repeat the count for an hour. If there are still less than 10 movements in an hour please call the physician.