

Sugar Land Advanced OB/GYN Center
TOM T. NGUYEN, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., P.A.
9722 Highway 90A, Suite 207 Sugar Land, TX 77478
(281) 322-2222

PRENATAL INSTRUCTIONS

Congratulations on your pregnancy! The following information may be of interest to you as part of your obstetrical care.

- ✘ **Alcohol, smoking and drugs:** Avoid alcohol, tobacco, drugs and vaping altogether during pregnancy because of their harmful effects to your baby. Alcohol consumption during pregnancy may cause fetal malformation and mental retardation. Smoking including marijuana may cause fetal growth retardation, placenta abruption, so is drug usage.
- ✘ **Backache:** It is a common problem during pregnancy due to postural change, relaxation of the pelvic joints and the vertebral discs of the lower back. Wearing low-heel shoes, sleeping on your side, applying a heating pad or heating cream such as Ben gay on your back may provide some relief.
- ✘ **Cat litter box:** Some cats carry Toxoplasmosis, a parasite that might cause fetal mental retardation. Avoid changing the litter box and wash your hands thoroughly after handling all pets.
- ✘ **Diet:** Try to eat a balanced diet including the following:
 - **Complex carbohydrates:** Multi-grain bread, brown rice, whole grain, legumes, organic fresh fruits and vegetables. Avoid eating raw bean sprouts.
 - **Protein sources:** Whole milk, cheese & yogurt, lean meat, organic poultry, wild caught small fish and beans.
 - **Good fats:** Sources of healthy fats include avocado, extra virgin olive oil, nuts, seeds, coconut, coconut oil, fatty fish such as salmon, trout, fresh tuna, herrings, sardines...
 - Avoid eating fried, fast foods, and foods high in refined sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and starches. Also avoid raw meat and raw seafood. You should drink eight 6 to 8 eight-ounce glasses of fluid including milk and water per day. Fruit juices such as orange or apple juice should be limited due to high sugar content. Coffee or tea should be limited to one cup a day. Avoid all sugary and soft drinks. Although there is no evidence of documented fetal anomalies, it is best to avoid foods or soft drinks containing artificial sweetener such as Sweet and Low, Nutrasweet moderately.
- ✘ **Dental checkup:** You should have regular dental cleaning and checkups during pregnancy. Dental works should be scheduled when you are beyond 14 weeks gestation. Avoid X-rays exposure unless it is extremely necessary. The abdomen needs to be protected with a lead apron if X-rays are to be used.
- ✘ **Exercise:** You should include at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily. Do what feel comfortable for you. Do not exercise to the point of discomfort. Walking, swimming, elliptical machine or stationary bicycling are good cardio exercises. Strength training (weightlifting) via circuit machines is safe during pregnancy. Activities to avoid would be horseback riding, skiing, scuba diving, motorboat, motorcycle riding, high-impact aerobic exercises, or other jarring sports. Women with a history of premature labor, premature rupture of membrane, multiple miscarriages, multiple births, bleeding, placenta previa, incompetent cervix, gestational hypertension...should avoid exercises.
- ✘ **Medications:** Please check with my office prior to taking any prescriptions or over-the-counter medications. Avoid taking any medications if the discomfort is minor or tolerable. For common illnesses, the following list of over-the-counter medications may be used:
 - **Allergy:** Benadryl 25 mg tablet one tablet three times a day. Claritin 10 mg may be used daily. It may cause drowsiness.
 - **Cold/Flu/Sinus:** Most cold symptoms will improve within 7-10 days without any medications. The use of humidifier, rest and increase of oral fluids may be helpful. **Sudafed** (30 mgs) tablet, Vicks **sinex** or **Afrin** nasal spray are helpful for nasal congestion. **Tylenol** may be used for fever or body ache. Flu vaccine is safe during pregnancy. You should get the injectable influenza vaccination during the flu season. Do not use nasal spray flu vaccine.
 - **Constipation:** You need to increase fiber in your diet by eating more fresh fruits, vegetables and drinking more fluid. Surfak, Colace, Metamucil, or Fibercon tablets may be used.
 - **Cough:** Robitussin DM cough syrup.

- **Diarrhea:** Avoid dairy products such as milk and cheese for a few days. Stay on a clear liquid diet, avoid any sport drinks. You may also drink any balanced salt solution such as Pedialite. Kaopectate can also be used.
- **Headache:** Tylenol regular strength (325 mg) 2 tablets or Extra strength (500 mg) one tablet 3-4 times a day. **Avoid Aspirin, Advil, Aleve, Motrin and Nuprin.**
- **Hemorrhoids:** Increase fluid and fiber such as fruits and vegetables in your diet to keep your stool soft. Preparation H or Anusol cream is safe to use during pregnancy.
- **Indigestion/Heartburn:** Avoid sour, greasy and spicy foods. Avoid lying flat after eating. Sleeping with your head elevated with a pillow may provide relief. On occasion, you may need to take antacids such as Maalox, Mylanta, Milk of magnesia, Rolaids or Tums. Do not use antacids with baking soda or sodium bicarbonate such as Alka-Seltzer.
- **Sore throat:** Cepacol, Sucrets lozenges or Chloraseptic spray.
- ✘ **Nausea/vomiting:** This can occur any time during early pregnancy. Symptoms will usually improve after 12 to 16 weeks gestation. Simple ways of preventing nausea include avoiding greasy, spicy, citric foods or sour drinks. Crackers, toast and dried fruits may be more tolerable. You should eat small and frequent meals. Try not to eat and drink at the same time. Vitamin B6 25 mg three times a day can be helpful.
- ✘ **Personal hygiene:** Avoid saunas, steam baths, Jacuzzis or hot baths throughout pregnancy especially during the first trimester. Extremely high temperature might increase risk of birth defects. Warm shower is a safer than tub bath. Avoid douching and tampons during pregnancy.
- ✘ **Prenatal vitamins:** Either prescription or over-the-counter prenatal vitamins with DHA should be taken daily after meals or at bedtime. In early pregnancy, prenatal gummies may be more tolerable. Prenatal vitamins do not cause weight gain. Pregnant patients need about 1200 mgs. of **calcium** daily. You should increase the calcium intake with yogurt, cheese, dark leafy green vegetables. Calcium supplements with either tablets or chewable forms can be taken.
- ✘ **Sexual intercourse:** As long as you and your partner are comfortable, you can continue having intercourse unless otherwise instructed. Absolute contraindications to sexual intercourse include placenta previa, vaginal bleeding, premature labor, premature rupture of membrane, cervical cerclage...
- ✘ **Stretch marks:** Most cases are not preventable. Try not to gain weight rapidly. Applying moisturizer lotion or Cocoa butter vitamin E cream over the breasts, abdomen, and thighs may be helpful. These lotions or creams are available over the counter at the local pharmacies.
- ✘ **Traveling:** Air travel is safe. Avoid long distance traveling or flying after 34 weeks (8 ½ months) gestation or if your pregnancy is complicated by premature labor or placenta previa. Be sure to stretch often and walking every 1-2 hours. Drink plenty of water during a long trip to prevent blood clots.
- ✘ **Vaginal discharge:** White non-odorous vaginal discharge will increase during pregnancy. If the discharge does not cause any itching, odor or discomfort, there is no need for treatment. Monistat cream or other similar over-the-counter preparations can be used during pregnancy to treat yeast infection.
- ✘ **Weight gain:** The ideal weight gain for the average size mother (BMI between 18-25) is 30-35 lbs. during the entire pregnancy. The thin patient (BMI 18 or less) should gain between up 40 lbs. For the overweight (BMI 25-30) or obese patients (BMI 30 or more), the total weight gain should be limited to 15-25 lbs. Pregnancy is not the time for you to engage in any diet program.
- ✘ **Zika virus:** The virus can cause small fetal head (microcephaly) and fetal mental retardation. Avoid traveling to areas that are endemic to the virus. The information of the endemic areas can be obtained from the Center of Disease Control website. Please inform the office if you recently returned from the endemic area before your current pregnancy.

FOR THE MONTHS TO COME

- ✘ The normal duration of the pregnancy is 40 weeks calculated from the first day of your last menstrual cycle. The estimated due date should be confirmed early in the pregnancy by using the ultrasound. Most patients will deliver their babies between 37 and 40 weeks. There is no scientific way to determine accurately the date of your delivery.
- ✘ Your prenatal visits frequency is every 4 weeks up to 28th week. The visit frequency will be every 2-3 weeks up to 36th week. Starting with your 36th week, the visits are weekly until delivery. During these visits, we will check your weight, blood pressure, testing the urine for sugar and protein. We also check the growth and the heartbeat of your baby. During

the visits, it is also a good time for you and me to discuss any questions, problems or any plan of care for your pregnancy. A pelvic exam is usually performed during the last month to check the position of the baby and cervical dilatation.

- ✦ It is important to keep your appointments because good prenatal care contributes to the good health for you and your baby. If you unable to keep your appointments, please inform our office.
- ✦ Emergencies such as deliveries, on occasion, arise during office hours and a wait may be inevitable. We will make every effort to contact you should this occur before your appointment time. Please understand these emergencies are very unpredictable. **If you were delivering your baby during office hours, you would want me to be with you.**
- ✦ **Routine testing during pregnancy:**
 - **Pap Smear:** To screen for cervical cancer if necessary.
 - **Gonorrhea and Chlamydia:** To screen for vaginal sexual transmitted diseases.
 - **Obstetrics profile:** To check for blood count, blood type, rubella titer, hepatitis B, syphilis, and urinalysis, HIV etc. during the first visit or when the fetal heartbeat is audible.
 - **Carrier testing:** To test for hereditary conditions that can affect the pregnancy.
 - **Nuchal translucency:** To screen for Down's syndrome and other trisomy by measuring the thickness of the baby's neck by a high-resolution ultrasound at about 12-week-gestation. You will need to have a MSAFP test to check for spina bifida at 16-week gestation. This test is optional for patients younger than 35 years of age.
 - **Quadruple screen:** This blood test is also done to screen for Down's syndrome, trisomy 18 and spina bifida between 15-18 weeks if you decide not to have the nuchal translucency test.
 - **Diabetic screen:** To screen for gestational diabetes between 24-28 weeks. A blood test will be drawn one hour after drinking a sugar solution. **You do not have to fast for this test.** If the test is abnormal, you will be asked to return for a 3-hour glucose tolerance test. You will need to fast overnight for this test.
 - **Vaginal group B strep:** To screen for group B streptococcus carriers at 35 weeks. If you are a carrier, your health may not be affected but the baby may acquire the infection during the delivery. There is no need for treatment before delivery if you are a carrier. You will be given intravenous antibiotics at the onset of labor to prevent the newborn infection.
 - **HIV and RPR testing:** A second HIV and Syphilis tests will be obtained at the third trimester as required by the Texas state law.
- ✦ **Ultrasounds:** It is a safe procedure to determine the fetal anatomy, fetal growth, placenta location etc. **A normal ultrasound does not guarantee a normal baby.** On occasion, I will refer you to a Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist for a detailed ultrasound if it is necessary. Ultrasound is not used to determine the gender of the baby because it is not reliable, and its expense is not covered by the insurance carrier.
- ✦ **Childbirth preparation classes (Lamaze):** The class is recommended for any pregnant patients. These classes are given on the campus of the hospital. Please register at memorialhermann.org/maternity or call (713) 222-CARE (2273).
- ✦ **Hospital registration:** This process can be done anytime during your pregnancy. Please ask my office staffs for a pre-registration folder. You can also register online by entering the website memorialhermann.org/maternity. The online registration information is also available on my website obgynsugarland.com You will need to go to the hospital to sign some paper works even if you already register online.
- ✦ **Hospital tour:** To reserve a free tour of the Labor and Delivery area, please register at memorialhermann.org/maternity or call (713) 222-CARE (2273).
- ✦ **Pain relief during labor:** Intravenous pain medications such as Stadol are available at your request. **Epidural anesthesia** is also available and will be administered by the anesthesiologist when requested. Epidural anesthesia is safe and does not cause long-term back pain.
- ✦ If you have **special requests** for delivery, please mention them to me for discussion during your visits. Your husband or partner is encouraged to be with you during labor and delivery.
- ✦ **Pediatrician:** Your newborn baby will be attended by the hospital neonatologist. Your pediatrician does not need to attend the baby in the hospital. However, you will need to select a pediatrician when the baby is discharged from the hospital. Please let me know if you need help in selecting one.
- ✦ **Circumcision:** Please discuss the risks and benefits of the procedure with your pediatrician or with me before deciding on the procedure. I will usually be the one to perform the procedure before the baby is discharged from the hospital.
- ✦ **Breast-feeding:** Breast milk by far is the best food for your newborn baby. Breast-feeding has several advantages over

formula. I would encourage you to consider it for your baby. After delivery, a hospital breastfeeding specialist will guide you through the process. The hospital also offers breast-feeding classes before delivery.

- ✘ **Maternity leave:** Each company sets its own rules and regulations regarding maternity leave policy. Please check with your company's guidelines and HR department regarding this matter. Unless there are specific medical indications or problems, it is difficult for me to make an exception to your company policy.

WHEN TO CALL US

- ✘ Some pregnant patients will have **vaginal spotting** during her pregnancy. If the bleeding persists or is heavier than a period, please let me know. Occasionally you may have vaginal spotting after intercourse; if the bleeding is heavy please call the office. Vaginal exam, especially during the last month of the pregnancy, may also cause vaginal spotting. If the bleeding concerns you, please call me any time.
- ✘ You will begin to feel fetal movements around 4½ months (18 weeks) to 5 months (20 weeks) of your pregnancy. If you are concerned that the baby is not active, please lie down on your side and count the fetal movements. Please call me if the fetus moves less than 5 times per hour.
- ✘ Please try to contact me during office hours for non-urgent, minor problems or for prescription refills. Please have your pharmacy number handy when you call, should it be needed.
- ✘ If there is an **emergency after office hours**, please call the main office number at **(281) 322-2222, you will be given an answering service number from the telephone message**. Please call the answering service and indicate to the operator that you are my patient and the nature of the emergency. Either I or the on-call physician will return your call. In the event of a telephone malfunction, please call Memorial Sugar Land Hospital Labor and Delivery unit at **(281) 725-5300** for further instructions. You can also go to the emergency room at the hospital for medical care.
- ✘ At the onset of labor, please call me if you are having regular contractions every 5 minutes apart for an hour, each contraction lasting 45-60 seconds **(5-1-1)**. Please call sooner if you live far from the hospital or if you had a history of fast labor. Also call if your water bag ruptures or if you have excessive vaginal bleeding even if you do not feel any contractions. If labor is starting, **please do not eat or drink**. The hospital labor and delivery unit is located on the third floor of the main building. After 9 PM, you will need to enter the hospital via the emergency room, which is in the back of the hospital.

Finally, our goal in providing your obstetrical care is your continued good health and the delivery of a healthy baby. We are looking forward to knowing you better during your pregnancy. If you have any questions at any time, please do not hesitate to ask me. It is our privilege to have you as our patient.

Sincerely,

Tom T. Nguyen, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.

Rev 2/2020