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**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR PREGNANCY!**

I am very happy for you. I want to share some of the do and don'ts of pregnancy.

A healthy diet is very important. I suggest you eat 5 meals a day instead of the standard, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. This would mean eating a much smaller portion with each meal. The idea being that by eating more times a day you will always have food in your stomach and this should decrease the gastric acids which cause nausea and vomiting in pregnancy. I suggest snacks such as melba toast, dry toast, and saltine crackers. Every patient is different and will tolerate different foods. I encourage you to try a variety of snacks. Pregnancy is not a time to diet. We simply want you to eat a healthy diet. By eating the adequate amount of protein, starch, vegetable, and fruits in your diet, you will create a healthy environment for your baby and minimize your weight gain. The appropriate weight gain for a female with ideal body weight is 25-30 pounds.

Fish is a good source of DHA. But, you should not eat any raw fish or sushi. Some fish contain more mercury than others. Sword fish and bottom feeding fishes such as flounder are not recommended. You should not eat more than two cans of Tuna fish per week.

Deli Meat should not be eaten at any time during your pregnancy. This includes all processed and natural cut meats. Hot dogs and sausages should also not be eaten at all. There is a small risk of Listeria. If you have eaten any of these foods and experienced diarrhea, then you should be tested for Listeria.

All foods should be thoroughly cooked and not red in the middle. You should not eat any raw meats.

Nausea and vomiting in the first trimester or the first twelve weeks of pregnancy is common. Ginger is a natural product that is safe during pregnancy and can reduce the nausea or vomiting. Ginger can be found as hard candy, gummies, pickled, or cooked. Any form of Ginger can combat nausea or vomiting. Ginger Ale is also helpful. It is important to always keep well hydrated. Drinking water is very important. Gatorade and natural coconut water is a good method of rehydrating. Please try to decrease fruit juices especially orange juice, cranberry juice, or apple juice. All-natural fruit juices contain a high amount of sugar and should be limited. All soft drinks should be eliminated from your diet.

Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, and chocolates. The recommendation is not to have more than one cup of coffee per day. Or in other words, no more than one cup of caffeine per day.

Exercise is important, but should be limited. Early in pregnancy the exercise program should be less aggressive, and you should not get your heart rate above 100. Stairmaster, stationary bicycle, rowing, and swimming are excellent. As your pregnancy progresses, squatting and lifting weight become more dangerous.

Provide your Doctor with a list of all medications taken. Any medications given by another Physician should be approved by your Obstetrician. In general, Tylenol is safe in pregnancy. It is ok to take Tylenol for headaches.

Never take Motrin, Advil, or Ibuprofen products during pregnancy.

Prenatal vitamins are important and should contain DHA. Gummy pre-natal or other over the counter pre-natal vitamins do not contain sufficient minerals or iron. Prescription Pre-natal vitamins are recommended and should be taken daily. There are numerous name brands and if one does not settle well there are many other prescription pre-natal vitamins that can be sampled.

Sex is safe in pregnancy as long as there is no vaginal bleeding.

Jacuzzi tubs or hot tubs are not recommended at any time during pregnancy. This would also include hot baths. Showers are ok. Increased body temperature during pregnancy can cause mental retardation. Sun tanning is not recommended.

Hair dyes and nail polishes are also not recommended.

Fetal movements are very important. You will begin to feel flutters and then the fetal kicks are palpable after 26 weeks. If you feel the baby is not moving well, then lay on your right side and count the fetal movements in a one-hour period. The baby when being tested, should move at least 10 times in a one-hour period of time. If the baby does not move 10 times in one hour than come to the Labor and Delivery Department at the Hospital and the baby will be formally tested with a BPP and NST.

If you have any Emergencies after hours call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency room. You do not have to call your Doctor's office prior to going to the hospital. Immediately upon your arrival at the Emergency room or Labor and Delivery, your Doctor will be notified.

All pregnant patients are able to obtain a same day office appointment. As long as the Doctor is not in surgery, you are welcome to come into the office for evaluation. If you are having contractions, bleeding, or feel leakage of fluid, we prefer you be checked at the hospital.

Occasional Contractions (Braxton-Hicks) are normal at 38 weeks of pregnancy. But, you should not have any contractions prior to 38 weeks. If contractions are persistent then come into Labor and Delivery for evaluation of Premature Labor. Bleeding is also not normal anytime during pregnancy. Always come into Labor and Delivery for evaluation of vaginal bleeding. Also, if you feel you are leaking vaginal fluid or may have broken your bag of water, then go to Labor and Delivery.

All your questions are important. I recommend they be written down prior to your appointment, so that all your questions can be answered.

I always try to be the attending Physician at the delivery, but no promises are ever made because one cannot predict the future. There is an in-house Hospitalist group which covers the practice when the Doctor is away at a Medical Conference or vacation. Always present to Labor and Delivery and give Dr. Halfon's name and he or the Doctor on call will be notified of your arrival.

I look forward to taking care of you during the next 10 months.

Isaac Halfon, M.D.