

FIRST TRIMESTER INSTRUCTIONS

The following are a few brief comments to help you get through the first three months of your pregnancy. You are welcome to ask us for more information at the time of your routine visits or, if you are very worried, by phone.

1. Nutrition and Diet:

Most expectant mothers (and their families) worry a lot about diet weight gain. Although you should be careful to eat properly, a well-balanced diet and a few supplements are all you and your baby needs. You should try to eat daily portions of fruits and vegetables, bread and cereal, Milk/milk products, and meat/poultry/fish/eggs. In addition to these, a prenatal vitamin a day is recommended. You should try to avoid excessive fats or sweets. Following these guidelines, a person who starts at a normal weight should gain between 20-30 pounds. If you are overweight you should try to restrict your weight to approximately 15 pounds and underweight patients may gain 30 to 35 pounds. Also, we suggest you avoid uncooked meat and fish because of the risk of acquiring certain infections are potentially harmful to you and your baby. Recently, the FDA has become concerned with the amount of mercury in certain fish. They have recommended pregnant women to do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tile fish. For more information visit www.fda.gov/Food.

2. Activity and Exercise

Most patients are able to maintain their normal activity and employment during pregnancy. Special precautions will be discussed in patients with certain symptoms or conditions. However, normal pregnant women should be able to work until delivery (if your job is extremely physically or mentally strenuous please discuss it with us). We encourage you to remain active and exercise. If possible, you may want to take a prenatal exercise class. However, if you experience significant abdominal discomfort, light-headedness, or you feel faint, you should stop immediately and discuss it with us. There is not need to restrict sexual intercourse unless you experience bleeding or unusual discomfort.

3. Bleeding and Cramping

Many women experience cramps or light bleeding in early pregnancy. Most of the times this is just a sign the placenta is attaching or the uterus in enlarging. However, these symptoms can also be a sign you may be having a problem. If your cramps are mild, you can just observe them and tell us about it at your next prenatal visit. If your cramps are moderate to severe, you should call us. Likewise, it is not uncommon for a woman in early pregnancy to have brown or red spotting. You should call us or tell us about this. If this occurs after intercourse, you may call us during office hours. If you have bleeding that is more than spotting or if you experience moderate to severe lower abdominal discomfort, call us immediately.

Most patients will go through their first 3 months uneventfully. We will assist you and educate you so you can make the best of this period. If you are not sure about the significance of a symptom or you have a question, please call us. We are here to help you.

OB Facts FAQ

Medications During Pregnancy

F.A.Q

While some medications are considered safe to take during pregnancy, the effects of other medications on your unborn baby are unknown. You may use this as a guideline for medications to use during your pregnancy. Remember no medication is safe for 100 percent of the people; however, there are times when the benefits of a medication far outweigh any risks. Please call the office if your symptoms persist or if you have a fever over 100.4 degrees.

Cold Symptoms

For allergy or cold symptoms, you may take Chlor-Trimeton, Sinus Tylenol, Robitussin (Plain or DM) for cough, and Sucrets or Chloraseptic Lozenges for sore throat. You may also use Saline nasal spray for nasal congestion. For **Coughs** Robitussin, Halls cough drops and Triaminic.

Indigestion / GERD

Mylanta (either chewable or liquid), Maalox, Mylicon, Gaviscon, Tums, Roloids, Pepcid and Prevacid are all safe to take for indigestion. If you have persistent problems with indigestion, there are some things you can do: eat small, frequent meals, avoid carbonated beverages and spicy foods, do not drink through a straw, and do not lie down after eating.

GERD - Use Tagamet or Pepcid AC

Headaches or Discomfort

Tylenol - Regular or Extra Strength. Do not use aspirin, unless directed by your physician

Minor Bladder Irritations

Eliminate all carbonated beverages, coffee, and tea from your diet. Increase your water intake to 8-10 glasses per day and drink 3-4 glasses of cranberry juice per day. If not better within 24 hours, please call the office.

Swelling

Do not add salt to your food (get rid of the salt shaker!) and limit or omit high-sodium foods such chips, salted nuts, pretzels, soy sauce, bouillon and canned soups, bacon or ham and other processed meats. Many canned and processed foods contain a lot of sodium. Elevate your feet whenever possible.

Backache

Avoid wearing shoes with heels and standing for long periods of time. Sit in chairs that provide good back support. A warm bath, heating pad, or cold compresses can help ease back pain. You may take Tylenol as needed for pain.

In the late second and third trimesters, back pain can be a sign of preterm labor or urinary tract infection. If you have back pain that is intermittent and rhythmic, doesn't respond to any of the above treatments, or is accompanied by severe pain and/or fever, call the office.

Nausea

Try eating dry crackers before getting out of bed in the morning. Eat every two or three hours throughout the day. Avoid smells that trigger nausea, highly seasoned or fatty foods, alcohol, caffeine, and cigarette smoke. Sometimes peppermints or ginger tea can help reduce nausea. Do not take prenatal vitamins on an empty stomach or if feeling nauseated. If not controlled with diet, try Emetrol (if not diabetic) or Nestrex, Doxylamine (Unisom) and Vitamin B6.

Leg Cramps

Avoid standing or sitting with your legs crossed for long periods and stay well-hydrated. Eat a balanced and calcium-rich diet. Get regular exercise and stretch your calf and thigh muscles by stretching them three times a day and before you go to bed (see below). Lie down on your left side to improve circulation to your legs. Try taking a warm bath before going to bed to help relax your muscles. Increase calcium intake by taking Calcet or Forfree (over the counter).

If you do get a cramp, immediately stretch your calf muscles by straightening your leg - press down on your heel first and gently flex your toes back toward your shins. It might hurt at first, but it will ease the spasm and the pain will gradually go away. Walking around for a few minutes after the cramp subsides may be helpful, too.

Stool Softener

Surfak, Docusate, Dialose, Metamucil, Fibercon are all safe to take during pregnancy.

Constipation

Try to avoid constipation by staying well-hydrated (drink plenty of fluids), eating fresh fruits and vegetables, and exercising. Milk of Magnesia, Senekot, Metamucil, Citrucel, Fibercon, warm prune juice and Glycerin suppositories are safe to take for constipation. For **Gas** try Gas-X, Mylicon and Phazyme.

Diarrhea

If you have diarrhea, you should stick to a bland or clear liquid diet until the diarrhea subsides. It is safe to take Kaopectate or Immodium to treat diarrhea after 12 weeks of pregnancy.

Hemorrhoids

To prevent hemorrhoids eat a healthy diet that includes fresh fruits and vegetables, drink plenty of liquids, exercise regularly, use a stool softener (if needed), and avoid standing or sitting in the same position for prolonged periods. If you develop hemorrhoids, you can soak your rectal area in tepid water for 10-20 minutes several times per day in the bathtub or using a sitz bath (a small basin that will fit into the opening of your toilet - can be purchased at most drug stores). Preparation-H, Anusol, and Tucks can be used to treat hemorrhoids.

Sleep: Benadryl (diphenhydramine) or Tylenol PM (acetaminophen & Diphenhydramine) or watch a complete strangers home movies ☺

Yeast Infection: Monistat

Dental

We encourage dental care during pregnancy. Let your dentist know you are pregnant so he can take adequate precautions, as indicated. You may have dental x-rays with an abdominal shield, and the dentist may use local anesthesia.

Is it safe to color my hair?

We suggest pregnant women consider waiting until after the first trimester, but after that we leave the decision up to each patient. No one has enough information to guarantee using chemical dyes on your scalp during pregnancy is completely safe. That said, there is no evidence using these dyes every month or two will cause birth defects, either.