



## ABOUT YOUR PREGNANCY

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Pregnancy means that a baby is growing inside of your uterus (womb). A normal pregnancy lasts about 40 weeks. Caregivers divide pregnancy into three blocks of time called trimesters. Each trimester last about three months. Your caregiver can estimate when your baby will be due. This is called your due date. Start prenatal care as early in your pregnancy as possible. Prenatal care can help prevent problems during your pregnancy and childbirth. It can also help find certain problems early, so they can be treated.

### MEDICINES:

\* Keep a list of your medicines: Keep a written list of the medicines you take, the amounts you take, and when you take them. Bring the list of medicines with you to each of your appointments. Do not take any medicines, over the counter drugs, vitamins, herbs, or food supplements without first talking to your caregiver.

\*Prenatal vitamins: Even with a healthy diet, you may not get the amount of vitamins and minerals that your baby needs. Prenatal vitamins can help you get the right amount of vitamins and minerals. Prenatal vitamins may also decrease the risk of certain birth defects. Your caregiver will suggest the right kind and amount of prenatal vitamins you need. Take your prenatal vitamin every day. Do not skip days because you think your diet is good enough.

**Ask your caregiver when to return for a follow up visit. Keep all appointments. Write down any questions you may have. This way you will remember to ask these questions during your next visit.**

### Staying Healthy during your pregnancy:

\* Eat a healthy diet: When you are going to have a baby, eating healthy is very important. During pregnancy, you need extra protein, vitamins, minerals, water and calories. You need these to help you have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby. Healthy foods include fruits, vegetables, breads, dairy products, and protein such as meat and beans. Dairy products include milk, yogurt, and cheese. **AVOID** raw or undercooked meat and fish.

\***Drink plenty of fluids:** Drink at least eight (8 ounce) cups of healthy liquids each day. Healthy liquids

include milk, water, or juice. Avoid liquids that have caffeine in them such as coffee, tea, and soda pop. **DO NOT drink liquids that contain alcohol.** There is no known “safe” amount of alcohol that you can drink while pregnant. You should NOT drink beer, wine, liquor, or any other kind of mixed drink. It can cause your baby to be born too small and have severe, lifelong learning problems.

\*Do not smoke: You should not smoke cigarettes or anything else during pregnancy. Your baby may weigh less at birth if you smoke. Smoking increases the chance of your baby being born too early or your baby not growing well. Second hand smoke may be just as dangerous. Talk to your caregiver if you are having trouble quitting smoking.

\*Exercise: Regular exercise during pregnancy is important. Talk with your caregiver about your exercise program. Exercising will help you feel better and keep you in good physical shape. Your labor and delivery could be easier if you exercise. Walking and swimming are great choices. Do not choose any exercise that could put you and your baby at risk for injury, like mountain climbing, surfing, or racquetball. Do not use a hot tub or sauna while you are pregnant.

\*Sexual Intercourse (sex): You can have sex until your labor starts, unless there are problems with your pregnancy. Ask your caregiver about ways and positions to have sex to adjust for your growing abdomen. Always use condoms during sex if you are at risk for getting a sexually transmitted disease (STD). STD's can be dangerous to you and your baby. Do not have sex if you are bleeding from the vagina or are having pain in your abdomen or vagina. Your caregiver may also tell you not to have sex if you have a history of preterm labor. Ask your caregiver for more information about having sex during your pregnancy.

\*Travel: Ask your caregiver for advice before taking a trip. Some common travel tips include the following.

\* By car: Wear your seat belt every time you drive or ride in a vehicle. Always wear both the lap belt and the shoulder harness, and wear them as snug as is comfortable. Wear the shoulder harness above your belly and below your neck. Fasten the lap belt under your belly and across your upper leg. Dress comfortably when going on long trips. Stop every hour to get out of the car and walk around. This will help blood flow to your legs, and prevent problems.

\*By airplane: Your caregiver may tell you to avoid flying during your first trimester. When flying at any time during your pregnancy, ask for an aisle seat. This will make it easier for you to get to the bathroom, and to walk around at least every hour.

\*Other travel tips: You may need to avoid traveling to high altitudes, especially later in your pregnancy. Avoid traveling to areas where medical care is poor and water is untreated. Talk to your doctor before traveling outside of the country while pregnant.

**Toxoplasmosis:** This is an infection that can be dangerous for pregnant women. You can get toxoplasmosis from eating raw meat or being around infected cat feces. It can cause birth defects, miscarriage, and other pregnancy problems. If you get toxoplasmosis, caregivers may treat it with medicine. The best thing you can do is to avoid getting toxoplasmosis in the first place. The following are some ways to avoid toxoplasmosis:

1) Wash your hands after touching raw meat, and make sure the meat is well cooked before eating it. Avoid eating raw eggs and unpasteurized milk.

2) Someone else should clean your cat's litter box while you are pregnant. If you must change the litter yourself, wear latex gloves, and wash your hands immediately afterwards. Do not garden in soil that cats use as a bathroom. Ask your doctor for more information about toxoplasmosis.

**Contact your caregiver if:**

- \* **You have watery fluid leaking from your vagina.**
- \* **You have sudden swelling and puffiness of your face, fingers, arms, ankles, or feet**
- \* **You have frequent headaches or headaches that will not go away**
- \* **You vomit more than three to four times daily**
- \* **You have dizziness, fainting, or blurred or dim vision**
- \* **You have chills or fever**
- \* **You have pain or burning when you urinate, are urinating less, or have pink or bloody urine.**
- \* **You are having frequent regular contractions. These pains may feel like menstrual cramps.**
- \* **You have sharp lower back pain.**
- \* **You have upper chest pain.**
- \* **You have questions about your pregnancy.**

**Seek Care Immediately if:**

**\* You are 20 weeks pregnant or more, and you any trauma, even if you are not hurt. For example, if you fall down a flight of stairs or are in a car accident. The force of the trauma may have caused problems with you or your baby without you knowing it.**

- \* **You feel part of the baby or the umbilical cord in your vagina.**
- **\* You have dull or sharp lower abdominal pain, spotty or heavy vaginal bleeding, or persistent contractions.**