

## **CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**

**286-6565**

### **Calling Our Office**

If you have a question or concern during office hours, please call **286-6565**. Identify yourself by name, and tell the receptionist you are an OB patient. If we cannot talk to you at that moment, we will call you back as soon as possible.

When the office is closed, one of the nurse-midwives as well as a physician, is always on call. You can reach the after hours provider by calling 286-6565 and follow the prompts. If you do not hear from someone in 15 minutes, please call back and leave a message.

### **DO NOT GO TO THE HOSPITAL WITHOUT CALLING US!**

**If something is happening that concerns you, CALL US!**

### **Over the Counter Medications**

- **Tylenol** (or acetaminophen) **Regular or Extra-Strength** – mild headache, muscle soreness. \*\*We do not recommend Ibuprofen unless instructed to do so by a doctor, nurse-midwife or nurse.
- **Plain Sudafed** (or pseudoephedrine) – colds, nasal stuffiness.  
*\*DO NOT TAKE Sudafed PE \**
- **Plain Robitussin** – cough.
- **Tums, Liquid Mylanta or Maalox** – heartburn.  
(Tums are also a good source of calcium for people who cannot drink milk or tolerate other dairy products)

\*\*If you do not already have a thermometer in your home, please get one as soon as possible.

### **Nutrition in Pregnancy**

Recommended weight guidelines are based on pre-pregnancy weight and other factors, and may range from 15-35 pounds.

Things you can do to keep weight gain within a healthy range:

1. **Drink 8-10 glasses of water per day.** This helps prevent cramping in early pregnancy and pre-term contractions.
2. Maintain a well balanced diet with lots of fruits and vegetables; reasonable portions of proteins and carbohydrates; minimize fat and “junk food” intake. Eat small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day with high protein foods (peanut butter, cheese, etc.)
3. Establish a routine of physical activity outside of work, school, usual activities, etc.

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**Caffeine and NutraSweet**

There currently is no strong evidence that reasonable caffeine and NutraSweet intake would cause you or your baby any problems. However, it makes sense to limit your intake of these substances as much as possible, with 1-2 servings per day as a reasonable level if you cannot eliminate them completely.

**Exercise Guidelines**

If you have not been exercising, start very slowly. Walking is a great exercise for anyone, with a moderate 10-15 minute walk at least 3 times per week to start out. Abdominal exercises are not recommended. Weight lifting should be limited to 25 pounds or less. Activities may need to be adjusted as the pregnancy progresses. Keep your heart rate less than 140 beats per minute during your activity. For those who are currently exercising, please discuss your routine with your provider.

**Your Due Date**

Your due date can be determined by your last period or ultrasound. IT IS ONLY AN ESTIMATE – babies can come at any time, with most coming during the 2 weeks before or the 2 weeks after your due date. The average duration of full-term pregnancy is 40 weeks (or 10 months)! First-time mothers tend to have their babies closer to or after the due date. However, the timing of your baby's birth is very individual, and very unpredictable.

**Travel Guidelines**

We recommend no airline travel past 36 weeks, and no lengthy car travel (greater than 3-4 hours) after 36 weeks.

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**COMMON CONCERNS IN PREGNANCY**

All of the following are common feelings in pregnancy. In general, they mean your body is adjusting to the pregnancy and do not represent any danger to you or your baby. However, if you have any questions, please call our office!

**BACK PAIN**

Very common in pregnancy due to hormonal changes and increased pressure on the back as the baby and uterus grow.

- Keep posture upright and straight – this decreases the pressure on the back.
- Do back stretches and exercises to strengthen those muscles.
- Strong abdominal muscles help decrease back pain as the uterus grows – pelvic rocks will help these muscles. Please ask us for a handout on these exercises if you are interested in doing them.
- Avoid high heels!
- If your job involves standing, take opportunities at breaks to sit down and/or do back stretches.
- Take Tylenol (Regular or Extra Strength)
- Heating pad to back on low setting
- Soak in warm bath
- Pregnancy support belt may be helpful
- **If severe, located in your upper back, associated with fever, severe nausea/vomiting, or bleeding, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**BREAST TENDERNESS/LEAKING**

Tenderness in the breasts is very common early in pregnancy due to hormonal changes. Leaking from the breasts can happen anytime, more common from 20 weeks on – also due to hormonal changes and stimulation. Leaking/tenderness may or may not occur. If it does not happen, do not worry!

- Wear a supportive, well-fitting bra
- Put cotton pads or a cotton handkerchief in bra cups if leaking. Change these frequently, and allow breasts to air-dry when possible.
- You can take Tylenol (Regular or Extra Strength) if needed for breast tenderness.

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**COLD SYMPTOMS**

Most colds are caused by viruses and will resolve themselves in 1-2 weeks. Pregnant women are more prone to colds due to changes in their immune systems.

- Increase fluids (especially juices and water)
- Rest
- Plain Sudafed for congestion (***\*NOT Sudafed PE\****)
- Tylenol (Regular or Extra Strength) for fever, aches and pains
- Plain Robitussin for cough
- Cepastat throat lozenges or Chloraceptic throat spray for sore throat (other lozenges are also safe)
- Salt water gargles for sore throat
- **Call the office if your temperature is greater than 100.4, if you have green or yellow drainage from your nose or coughing up green/yellow phlegm, or have white patches in your throat.**

**CONSTIPATION**

Constipation is usually caused by slower passage of foods through the bowel, due to hormonal changes in pregnancy.

- High-fiber diet (fruits, vegetables, roughage, bran cereals, etc.)
- Drink 8-10 8 oz. glasses of water per day (plus other fluids)
- Increase physical activity (walking, etc.)
- Colace (or docusate sodium) 1-2 capsules per day
- Hot liquids in the morning (coffee, tea, hot chocolate, prune juice)
- If no relief, you can use Metamucil or Citrucel fiber laxatives.

**DIARRHEA**

- Drink only clear liquids for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid milk, cheese and other dairy products.
- May stop prenatal vitamins until diarrhea resolves.
- **If diarrhea persists more than 2 or 3 days, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**DIZZINESS OR FAINTING**

Usually due to your body adjusting to more blood and fluid, with mild changes in your blood pressure, can also be due to dehydration, slight drop in blood sugar or lower iron supply.

- Increase water intake to at least 8-10 glasses per day (along with other juices, etc.)

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**DIZZINESS OR FAINTING (cont.)**

- Change positions slowly, especially when going from lying down to standing, or sitting to standing.
- Eat small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day with high protein foods (peanut butter, cheese, etc.)
- Stay away from high sugar foods (sodas, candy, cake, etc.)
- **If it happens frequently or is associated with severe nausea or vomiting, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**FAST HEARTBEAT**

Fast heartbeat can be common in pregnancy due to increased amount of blood and hormone changes, and can occur without relation to any heavy physical work. It usually resolves itself quickly, but can recur.

- Sit down or lie down.
- Keep breathing slow and easy.
- **If it does not resolve quickly, or occurs frequently with a heart rate of 140 beats per minute or above, or is associated with chest pain, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**FATIGUE**

Especially common in early pregnancy due to hormonal changes.

Common in later pregnancy due to physical changes as the baby grows.

Can be related to lower iron levels in your body.

- Increase rest time
- Increase fluids
- Get some level of physical activity every day or at least several times per week (walking, etc.). It increases the energy available to your muscles and nourishes them with oxygen.
- Eat small, frequent meals with high protein snacks between them.
- Share responsibilities with family and friends.

**HEADACHES**

More common in pregnancy due to hormonal changes.

- Tylenol (Regular or Extra Strength)
- Increase fluids
- Increase rest
- Watch for the times that cause you stress, and work to help those things be less stressful, if possible.

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**HEADACHES (cont.)**

- Lie down in a dark room
- Cool or warm cloth to the area that hurts (whichever is most helpful).
- **If the headache persists, and/or gets worse, or is associated with changes in your vision or severe nausea/vomiting, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**HEMORRHOIDS**

Common in pregnancy because of hormonal changes. Occasionally you may have spotting from hemorrhoids.

- Try to avoid becoming constipated (increases the possibility of hemorrhoids forming and makes existing ones more sensitive).
- Tucks pads (to decrease swelling and tenderness)
- Anusol or Preparation H creams
- Sitz baths (or sitting in tub of warm water)
- **If severe bleeding or pain occurs, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**INDIGESTION, HEARTBURN, OR GAS**

Usually caused by hormonal changes in the digestive system.

- Tums, Mylanta, or Maalox for heartburn/indigestion
- Phazyme (or simethicone) for gas
- Drink fluids after or before meals, not during.
- Sit upright for 1-2 hours after eating
- Bland diet (no greasy or spicy foods)
- **If the pain gets worse, or is accompanied by severe nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**LEG CRAMPS**

Common in pregnancy, and usually occur in calf muscle, probably due to increased fluid and hormonal changes.

Difficult to prevent, since the cause is uncertain.

- Avoid pointing your toes toward the floor (may cause cramp)
- When they occur, point your toes up toward your knee (not down at the floor). This stretches the muscle and helps relieve the cramp.
- Massage and applying heat to the muscle may help.
- Possibly related to the amount of calcium and/or potassium in the body – try to increase milk, cheese, yogurt, orange juice, and bananas.
- Rest with legs elevated when possible

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**LEG CRAMPS (cont.)**

- **If the pain does not resolve, and/or the leg is red or discolored, swollen and/or hot to touch, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**NAUSEA AND VOMITING**

Usually caused by pregnancy hormone that is at its highest in the first 13-14 weeks of pregnancy, and can also be caused by stomach viruses.

- Keep crackers or pretzels beside your bed. Eat before you raise your head off the pillow.
- Eat small amounts of food frequently
- Try to keep something in your stomach at all times (eat every 2-3 hours)
- Crackers, pretzels, bread and pasta may help
- Vitamin B6 100mg in the morning and evening
- Take prenatal vitamins at night (or stop taking for a while)
- Wear Sea Bands around your wrists. May be obtained at pharmacy.
- **If unable to keep any food or fluids down for more than 24 hours, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**NOSEBLEEDS, BLEEDING GUMS**

Common in pregnancy due to increased blood flow to nose tissue and gums.

- Use soft toothbrush to decrease pressure on gums while brushing.
- Saline nasal spray will help the nose tissue be less dry and sensitive.
- Place a small amount of Vaseline in each nostril, especially at bedtime.
- Cool mist humidifier while sleeping.
- If bleeding occurs, pinch the bridge (upper sides) of your nose together and hold pressure until the bleeding stops. Drop your head down (not back) while you are doing this.
- **If the nosebleed continues to be heavy, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**PELVIC PAIN, PRESSURE, GROIN PAIN**

Common throughout pregnancy. In early pregnancy, hormonal changes can cause mild cramping and stretching sensations. In mid-to-late pregnancy, growth of the uterus and baby movement can cause mild cramping and stretching of the ligaments and muscles that hold up the uterus. Normal relaxation of the pelvic muscles and joints helps give the baby more room in the pelvis during birth.

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**PELVIC PAIN, PRESSURE, GROIN PAIN (cont.)**

When a woman has had babies before, the abdominal wall muscles have to work harder to hold up the uterus. This may make you feel bigger sooner, may cause more pressure on your back, and may cause you to feel more pressure on your pelvic bones and bladder.

Sharp pain, more on one side than another, especially when you get up, turn over in bed, or walk, is probably pain from pulling of the ligaments that hold up the uterus on either side (called the round ligaments). This is not a danger to you or the baby, but it can be very uncomfortable.

Comfort measures for pelvic pain, pressure, and/or groin pain:

- Warm bath – this helps the muscles and ligaments relax
- Tylenol (Regular or Extra Strength)
- Change your position to decrease the stretching of the ligaments
- Constipation or full bladder may increase discomfort
- **If the pain gets worse, is associated with bleeding, nausea/vomiting, fever, decreased movement of the baby after about 24 weeks, or anything else that you are concerned about, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**RASHES/ITCHING**

Common in pregnancy due to hormonal changes and may occur on the abdomen or any other body area.

- Can use hydrocortisone cream, Benadryl cream, Caladryl, aloe gel, etc.
- Aveeno baths may decrease itching
- **If it continues to extend over a larger part of your body, or itching becomes more severe, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**SALIVATION (LARGE AMOUNTS OF SPIT)**

Common in pregnancy, although cause is not known.

- Chewing gum, or sucking lemon drops may help
- Try eating several small meals instead of larger ones
- Listerine mouth wash may help

**SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

Common in pregnancy due to hormonal changes and pressure of the baby and uterus on the chest.

- Keep your posture upright and straight – avoid slumping

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**SHORTNESS OF BREATH (cont.)**

- Stretch your arms up over your head when you feel short of breath, this increases the room in your chest for your breathing muscles to work
- **If it occurs suddenly and is severe, or is associated with chest pain, cough, or abdominal pain, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**SPOTTING**

Often happens during pregnancy for a variety of reasons, but **always** needs to be reported to the office.

- May happen after sex, due to more blood flow to the vagina and cervix
- Should NOT be as heavy as a period
- **Call the office or after hours number with ANY spotting or bleeding.**

**STRETCH MARKS**

Related to hormonal changes and physical stretching of the skin. Cannot be prevented, and may be on the abdomen, buttocks, breasts, etc.

- May apply lotions or creams, this may help them itch less

**SWELLING**

Very common in pregnancy due to more blood and fluid.

Usual drainage system of legs is less effective as baby and uterus grow, causing fluid to be retained in legs and feet.

- If your job involves sitting, take opportunities to get up and walk around
- At home, lie down and raise your feet/legs up **above the level of your heart**
- Increase water to 10-12 glasses of water per day (helps body avoid holding on to water because it is not getting enough)
- Increase the protein in your diet (chicken, fish, lean beef or pork, and beans) to help hold fluid in your blood vessels
- Vitamin B6 100mg every morning and night (works to help the body get rid of excess fluid)
- **If swelling suddenly gets worse, you have blurred vision/spots, headache that does not go away with Tylenol, or severe abdominal/stomach pain happens, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**CENTRAL CAROLINA OB/GYN, PA**  
**286-6565**

**URINARY FREQUENCY**

Common in early and late pregnancy due to hormonal and physical changes. You may feel you do not go much when you go, but you are going all the time! Pregnant women are more susceptible to urinary tract infections.

- Plan regular trips to the bathroom to keep your bladder as empty as possible
- Drink 8-10 glasses of water a day – decreasing your fluid intake will not help, and it may increase your risk of bladder and kidney infections
- Always wipe from front to back to decrease your chance of infections
- Urinate before and after intercourse
- **If your urine ever burns or stings, if you have pain in the mid to lower part of your back, especially with fever, or if you have a lot of pelvic pressure with urination, CALL THE OFFICE!**

**VAGINAL DISCHARGE**

Common in pregnancy due to hormonal and physical changes and is usually clear to cloudy, with thick consistency; but usually does not cause odor or itching.

- Wear cotton crotch panties
- Sleep without underwear at night
- NO DOUCHING!
- Avoid tight pants and material that does not allow air to circulate
- Yeast infections are common in pregnancy, usually identified by itching and thick, cottage cheese-like discharge without odor
- Monistat 7-day cream is safe in pregnancy. Insert the applicator just inside the vaginal opening
- **Call the office if the discharge has a bad odor, is very thin, like water, appears green or bloody, if your vagina is swollen or inflamed, is associated with increased cramping, or if you have any sores or blisters.**