

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF PREGNANCY

At which hospital will I deliver my baby?

We deliver at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing

I just found out I'm pregnant and having some cramping. Is this normal?

Yes, mild cramping and bloating is very common early in pregnancy and usually not anything to worry about. This is typically caused by the growing and stretching of your uterus and your body's preparation to carry your baby. Please let us know if you experience severe or one-sided pain as these may be a sign of something more serious.

What should I be eating (and NOT eating) during pregnancy?

General Nutrition

Most women only require ~300 extra calories per day—which is equal to half a sandwich and a glass of skim milk. Extra nutrients needed during pregnancy include iron, folic acid, and protein; a portion of these may be obtained with a daily prenatal vitamin supplement. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has designed an online interactive diet-planning program specifically for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding called the “Daily Food Plan for Moms”. You may access this program at www.choosemyplate.gov/mypyramidmoms/index.html.

Caffeine

Moderate caffeine intake of 200 milligrams per day or less does not appear to increase the risk of miscarriage or preterm birth and is considered safe in pregnancy. 200 milligrams is the equivalent of ~ two 8 oz cups of brewed coffee.

Foods to Avoid

- Unpasteurized milk or soft cheeses
- Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, shellfish
- Prepared meats, like hot dogs and deli meats, unless they are heated until streaming hot

**Seafood that is low in mercury, including shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, and catfish ARE SAFE to eat during pregnancy. You can safely eat up to 12 Oz of these fish per week.*

How much weight should I gain?

Recommended weight gain during pregnancy depends on your pre-pregnancy weight. Women who have a normal body mass index (BMI) of <30, should gain between 25-35 pounds. If your BMI is >30, the recommended weight gain is only 11-20 pounds.

Is exercise safe during pregnancy?

Yes! Not only is exercise safe in pregnancy, but it is recommended that all healthy women should begin or continue moderate-intensity aerobic activity during pregnancy. Current guidelines recommend exercising at least 30 minutes per day on most days of the week. You may access additional information regarding exercise on another link in our website.

Can I travel while pregnant?

Yes. The best times to travel are typically between 14 and 28 weeks gestation because the most common pregnancy emergencies occur during the 1st and 3rd trimesters. However, for uncomplicated pregnancies, car and air travel can be done up to 36 weeks. Remember to drink plenty of water during travel to stay well hydrated.

If traveling by car, it is recommended to stop every 2 hours or so to get out of the car and move around to increase circulation. If flying, it must be with a commercial airline or pressurized aircraft. It is also recommended that you move around the aircraft every 2 hours or so to increase circulation. If you are planning an international flight, the cut off point for traveling is often earlier than 36 weeks. Many cruise companies require that you be less than 24 weeks to travel. If there have been any complications in your pregnancy, please call the office before you make any travel plans.

Is it safe to use a hot tub while pregnant?

Hot tubs should be avoided during the first trimester as the heat may affect the development of the neural tube in a developing fetus. After the first trimester you may safely use a hot tub in water less than 100°F. Limit use to 10-15 minutes at a time and stay well hydrated.

Can I “tan” while I’m pregnant?

Yes, pregnant women can tan outdoors, but need to use extra precautions due to increased sun sensitivity. Pregnant women are more prone to sunburn, sun spots, and sun exposure can worsen “pregnancy mask”. Be sure to use sunscreen and drink plenty of water because high temperatures can cause dehydration.

Self-tanning lotions typically do not penetrate the skin and may be used safely in a well-ventilated area.

It is not recommended for pregnant women to use tanning beds or booths.

Can I use insect repellent?

Insect repellents protect against mosquito bites that can transmit the West Nile Virus and tick bites which can transmit Lyme Disease. The best repellents use a chemical called DEET (Diethyltoluamide) which is very effective.

There is no evidence that the use of DEET by pregnant or lactating women poses a health hazard to unborn babies or children who are breastfeeding. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has advised that pregnant women take precautions to reduce their risk of West Nile Virus by avoiding mosquito bites and using protective clothing and DEET based repellents.

Am I allowed to paint?

Painting with latex paint is considered safe during pregnancy with proper ventilation. Please do not climb on ladders while pregnant due to changes in balance and the risk for falls.

Is it safe to dye my hair?

According to the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, hair dyes are probably safe for use during pregnancy because so little dye is absorbed through the skin. It may be best to avoid dyeing in the first trimester if possible.

Are dental visits safe?

Yes, dental work, including routine cleanings and cavity fillings, is safe during pregnancy. Be sure to notify your dentist before your visit that you are pregnant. X-rays are safe during pregnancy if necessary, but require double lead shielding of the abdomen. If you require a dental filling or more extensive surgery, local anesthesia WITHOUT epinephrine is recommended. Most antibiotics used for dental purposes are in the penicillin family and are safe for use during pregnancy.

Can I take herbal supplements?

Unlike prescription drugs, natural herbs and supplements do not go through the same scrutiny and evaluation process by the FDA. As a result, the quality and strength of an herbal supplement can vary between two batches of the same product and between different manufacturers.

Many herbs and supplements are NOT safe during pregnancy. Few studies have been done to measure the effects of various herbs on pregnant women or a developing fetus. The FDA urges pregnant women not to take any herbal products without talking to their healthcare provider first.

I have allergies, what can I take?

Nasal stuffiness and drainage are very common symptoms in pregnancy. Many women with no prior allergies often complain of these symptoms during pregnancy only. These symptoms are typically the result of the hormone induced swelling of the nasal passages and can actually make true allergy sufferers worse.

The best thing to do is avoid your allergy triggers and stay away from people who smoke. Many over-the-counter antihistamines are safe to use including Benadryl, Zyrtec, and Claritin. Please contact us if you have been prescribed an allergy medication and we will check the safety for you.

Can I get a massage?

Only a handful of small studies have focused on massage in pregnancy. Some benefits may include lowered anxiety, improved sleep, and a decrease in the minor aches and pains of pregnancy.

Generally, a massage is safe during pregnancy, but be sure the massage therapist is aware that you are expecting. Many will adjust their technique to address the changes your body goes through as your pregnancy progresses.

What if I am in an accident?

If you have any slips and falls or strike your abdomen or are in an automobile accident, please **call our office immediately or the on call physician after hours.**

I have severe nausea and vomiting. What can I do?

Nausea and vomiting is very common in pregnancy and affects 70-85% of women. Hormonal changes, emotional factors, and delayed emptying of the stomach can all contribute to these symptoms. These symptoms may occur any time of day or night.

We recommend eating small, frequent meals that combine protein and carbohydrates every 2-3 hours. You may also try eating a small, bland snack (such as crackers or toast) before getting out of bed in the morning. Limit fatty and spicy foods. Eat foods high in protein and B Complex: Nuts, dried fruits, brown rice, peanut butter, cheese, etc.

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends Vitamin B6, 25 mg by mouth 3-4 times per day as the first line of treatment for nausea and vomiting. You may also add Unisom (doxylamine) 12.5 mg (1/2 tab) by mouth 3-4 times per day to the B6. Prescription anti-nausea drugs are available if needed.

Please call our office for significant weight loss or if unable to keep liquids down for 24 hours.