

**ASSOCIATES FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH**  
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**Congratulations on your pregnancy!** Most women have healthy pregnancies and babies. Occasionally, pregnant women have problems and need to be monitored closely. Prenatal care can prevent or control most problems. Regular appointments with your physician are very important during your pregnancy.

Emergencies, deliveries and patients with urgent problems will affect the office schedule. We need your understanding during these times. We may need to reschedule your appointment or ask for your patience as the schedule runs late.

**Please Read This Handout Completely Before The Next Visit.**  
**Make a List of Any Questions You May Have.**

**Office Appointments:** On your first prenatal visit with the doctor you will have a thorough examination including a Pap smear and pelvic exam. On each return visit to the office, we will check the following things to help monitor your health: A urine specimen for sugar and protein, your blood pressure, your weight, the size of your abdomen, and the baby's heartbeat.

**Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking During Pregnancy**

**Street Drugs:** Cocaine, LSD, Heroin, Marijuana, "Uppers", "Downers", Tranquilizers, and Amphetamines are very dangerous drugs to use. These drugs should never be used during pregnancy.

**Alcohol:** The effects of limited or moderate alcohol use during pregnancy are unknown at this time. There is no "safe" level of alcohol. The baby takes in all the alcohol you drink. Please think before you drink an alcoholic beverage.

**Cigarettes:** Smoking decreases the amount of oxygen available to your baby and may cause multiple problems. The greatest risk of smoking is premature labor and birth. Pregnant women that smoke are at a higher risk for miscarriage, stillbirth, premature babies, low birth weight babies, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that cigarette-smoking be stopped completely during pregnancy and breastfeeding. We also recommend that you don't smoke after the baby is born. Smoking around your baby increases the child's risk of ear infections, asthma, coughs, Pneumonia, Bronchitis, and death under the age of five due to respiratory disease.

**Caffeine:** Studies have shown that high amounts of caffeine consumption during pregnancy increase the frequency of birth defects. Try to limit our consumption of coffee, tea, sodas, chocolate, and other caffeinated products to 8 ounces per day. You may use decaffeinated products. **Nutrasweet and Saccharin:** Effects of these two artificial sweeteners during pregnancy are unknown at this time. Anyone on a PKU diet (low in phenylalanine) should avoid Nutrasweet. We prefer that you limit your consumption to the equivalent of two packs of SweetnLow or Equal per day.



**Paint and Solvents** There is no danger associated with painting during pregnancy in a wellventilated room. DO NOT use leadbased paints or sprays. Paint stripping agents should also be avoided.

**Medications:** Never take any medications (other than those listed on our website) without checking with your physician. This is especially important during the first 18 weeks of pregnancy when the vital organs of the baby are developing. If the medication does not help or change the symptoms, **do not continue to take it!**

### **Illness, Colds, Coughs, Flu & Sore Throat**

**Nausea & Vomiting (Morning Sickness):** Usually nausea and vomiting are associated with the first three to four months of pregnancy. It is usually mild but can be severe in some cases. The following suggestions may help you cope:

1. Keep saltine crackers at your bedside and eat a few before getting out of bed in the morning.
2. Eat frequent small meals instead of three large meals per day. Try to include carbohydrates in your meals, which may help calm your stomach. Crackers, toast, pretzels, and cookies are a few examples of foods high in carbohydrates.
3. Drink fluids between meals instead of with meals. Separate wet foods and dry foods. Drink one hour after or before food.
4. Avoid spicy, fatty, and fried foods.
5. Eat a light carbohydrate and protein snack before bed.
6. If these suggestions do not help, call the office.

**Cold Medicines:** You may take Sudafed (Pseudoephedrine is the generic name for Sudafed) 30mg or 60mg tablets for nasal congestion. This is available at the drugstore without a prescription. Take as directed on the box. Tylenol Sinus, Actifed (allergy) and Benadryl may also be taken.

**Cough Medications:** You may use Robitussin DM or Benilyn cough syrup along with Sudafed. Take two teaspoons every four hours as needed. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids, fruit juices, water and Gatorade. Monitor your temperature several times per day. If you have a fever over 101 and medications are not helping, please contact your Primary Care Physician.

**Sore Throat:** Gargle with warm salt water four or more times per day as needed. Keep your throat moist with hard candy, mints or lozenges. Cepacol, Chloraseptic, Secrets Lozenges or spray are permitted. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

**Indigestion & Heartburn:** May occur frequently in pregnancy. To relieve the symptoms, try the following:

1. Try to limit the amount of fat in your diet.
2. Eat four to six small meals instead of three large ones.
3. Avoid lying down after a meal.
4. An antacid may help if the above has not helped. Riopan, Maalox, Mylanta, Gaviscon, or Gelusil are examples. Take as directed, usually a dose with each meal and before bed. Liquid antacids work best.

**Do not use Pepto-Bismol or aspirin products.**

**Diarrhea:** We recommend that you stay on a clear liquid diet for twentyfour hours. A clear liquid diet consists of juices and drinks that you can see through (cranberry juice, grape juice, tea, apple juice, water, popsicles, clear broth and Gatorade). **Do Not Drink Milk or Eat Milk Products!** You may slowly add solid foods after twentyfour hours. Start with bland foods (crackers, dry toast, apples, bananas, rice, mild beans, potatoes, etc.) and gradually add other foods as tolerated. Do not add milk or milk products for at least fortyeight hours. Kaopectate may also be used. **If this has not helped, call the office.**

**Constipation:** Whole grain cereals, bulk-forming foods, breads, fresh vegetables, fruits, and fruit juices (apple cider or apple juice) should help regulate your stools. Drink at least six to eight glasses of water per day. If dietary changes do not help, Metamucil may be taken daily. For gas pains, you may take Riopan Plus or Mylicon chewable tablets as directed. You may also take Dulcolax tablets/suppositories or Colace stool softener. These can be purchased at the drug store without a prescription.

**Hemorrhoids:** Preventing constipation is the first line of defense in treating hemorrhoids. Straining with bowel movements, lifting, pushing, or pulling heavy objects will cause hemorrhoids to become inflamed. You may use Tucks or Witch Hazel to relieve itching. Ice packs will help decrease the swelling. Anusol or Preparation H may also be used.

**Vaginal Discharge:** Many women have increased vaginal discharge during pregnancy. This is normal as long as you are not having irritation or itching. If discharge has an odor or becomes irritating, please call the office.

**Douching:** Never douche while pregnant. It is not recommended to douche routinely even when not pregnant.

**Swelling:** Please let us know if you are having abnormal swelling of your face, fingers, hands, feet, and/or legs. Try to avoid salty foods such as smoked or processed meats, canned soups, canned vegetables, chips, etc. It is also helpful to rest on your left side with your feet elevated twice a day for forty to sixty minutes.

**Bleeding:** Any type of bleeding during pregnancy should be reported to your physician. If you pass any tissue, please save it for the physician to examine.

**Sexual Intercourse:** This is not restricted during pregnancy unless your physician specifically recommends otherwise. If you are bleeding vaginally or you think you are leaking fluid, report it to the physician and do not have intercourse.

**Headaches:** Tylenol or ExtraStrength Tylenol may be used in case of headache pain (follow the direction on the bottle). Do not take aspirin, aspirin-containing products, or Ibuprofen (Advil) during pregnancy.

**Nosebleeds:** Usually secondary to dryness, nosebleeds are common during pregnancy. A humidifier, salt nasal spray (Ocean Spray), or Vaseline on nostrils may help. If bleeding does not stop, please call the office.

**Dental Care:** Dental hygiene is important during your pregnancy, as your teeth are more prone to cavities at this time. If you need dental care, please wait until you are three months pregnant if possible. We prefer a local

anesthetic without epinephrine if one is needed. Xrays are fine if your abdomen is shielded with a lead apron. Be sure the dental office personnel know that you are pregnant. If you require more than a local anesthetic, please have the dental office contact our office to discuss the procedure.

**Hair Changes:** Hair loss is common during pregnancy and after delivery. This is reversible. Hair dyes may not take or last as long during pregnancy. Please consult your hairdresser for problems.

**Exercise:** Exercise in moderation is helpful during pregnancy. Swimming, walking and bicycling are all good forms of exercise. If you are active in sports prior to pregnancy, you may continue as long as you have no problems. Use common sense in all activities.

**Sunbathing & Suntan Centers:** Exposure to the sun or tanning beds may cause sunburn and skin cancer. We do not recommend that you suntan in a tanning bed at anytime. Please use sunscreen when outside to protect your skin from harmful rays of the sun.

**Saunas & Hot Tubs: Stay out of all hot tubs, saunas, whirlpools, and Jacuzzis!!!** Baby is not able to regulate temperature and depends on you not to overheat.

**Indiana Car Seat & Seat Belt Law:** Effective January 1, 1984, the law mandates (orders) that all children under the age of three be properly restrained by a car seat. Children ages three to four must be restrained by a car seat or seatbelt. In a car crash, your unbelted body could be thrown forward. This could crush your child between the windshield or dash and your body if you were holding the child on your lap. If you are wearing a seatbelt and holding your baby, the baby could still be thrown from your arms and into the windshield. Indiana law mandates that all passengers in a car must wear a seatbelt. Shoulder and lap belts are the best. Always place under your abdomen across your thighs. This will help to prevent abdominal injuries in case of a crash. **Protect yourself and your baby. Wear a seatbelt every time you get into the car even when riding in the back seat. Please use a car seat after the baby is born! Baby's safety is your responsibility.**

**Circumcision:** Circumcision is the cutting away of the foreskin that covers the end of the penis. This is usually done by your Obstetrician in the hospital, one or two days after birth. The surgery has few risks. There is some controversy about the need for circumcision. It is the parent's decision to have their son circumcised. In a newborn, the pain is believed to be minimal. The baby will cry during and shortly after the procedure but usually quiets with comforting. Complications are possible but rare, the most common being hemorrhage, infection, or injury to the penis. Please consult your pediatrician for questions or concerns about circumcision.

