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PREGNANCY / PRENATAL CARE FACTS, TIPS AND HINTS

Schedule of Prenatal Visits

Prenatal visits are scheduled as appropriate for your pregnancy. Certain tests are performed at certain times during the pregnancy and are summarized below.

Gestational Age (in weeks) Test/Procedure

8 to 10	First visit, pregnancy dating, and appropriate lab tests.
11 to 13	First Trimester screen: Ultrasound for nuchal translucency and blood tests.
15 to 17	Extended AFP screen “Quad Screen” or amniocentesis, if desired/applicable.
18 to 22	Ultrasound.
26 to 28	Glucose Tolerance test
35 to 37	Culture for group B strep.

Low risk, uncomplicated pregnancies require fewer visits to care for a healthy baby and mother. Higher risk pregnancies require more visits. Your primary care doctor will recommend a schedule that is right for you.

Our nurse practitioner and nurse midwife are an important part of our team and will provide some of your care in conjunction with your doctor. They provide prenatal and gynecological care as well as patient education. In addition to their medical knowledge, take advantage of their expertise in preparation for delivery, breast feeding, diet and exercise.

Delivery

We deliver all of our babies at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla. For details about the hospital and a virtual tour, please see the link on our website.

Due Date

Your due date is typically established early in pregnancy. This is done according to your last menstrual period and may be modified by ultrasound and pelvic exam. Ultrasounds done in late pregnancy are not accurate in predicting the due date, since ultrasound measures only the size of the baby, not its gestational age. Ultrasounds are not *routinely* performed after 18 to 22 weeks, except as medically necessary.

Induction

Full-term delivery may occur from 37 to 42 weeks of pregnancy (the due date is an estimate and is the day the pregnancy reaches 40 weeks). Although many patients hope to deliver when they are full term and before, this is often not the case. It is not uncommon to go past the due date, especially in the first pregnancy. Labor is typically induced after a pregnancy has reached 41 weeks (one week past the due date). Some women with pregnancy complications may need to be induced before this time. Induction of labor is a medical intervention that has associated risks and is performed for medical or obstetric indications. If labor induction is necessary, your doctor will discuss this in detail with you.

Delivering Doctor

Although we would like to be present at the birth of all of our patients, this is not possible. If your own doctor is unable to be with you in the hospital, you will be cared for by the designated on-call physician from IGO. The doctors in our call group are well trained, experienced, and committed to taking the best care of you and your baby. We will assist you to the best of our ability in achieving the birth experience that you are seeking, but recommend that you remain flexible, since labor and delivery rarely goes exactly as planned, and the surprises add to making it a memorable experience. We deliver patients at Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla, a state of the art hospital with a top-notch labor and delivery staff, 24 hour anesthesia services, private postpartum rooms, lactation support, and a Level 2 nursery with excellent neonatal care when needed.

Postpartum visits

Postpartum visits are scheduled to provide you with information on contraception and ensure that your physical and emotional recovery is progressing well. Your doctor will advise you when you should schedule your postpartum visit. If you feel that you need to be seen sooner or have questions, please feel free to call at any time.

Diet

Weight Gain

During pregnancy, the dietary requirement is an extra 300 calories a day. Appropriate weight gain during pregnancy depends on your pre-pregnancy weight. You should gain weight gradually, the least amount in the first trimester, and steadily increase up to a pound per week in the third trimester. Please keep in mind that it is not wise to diet during pregnancy.

Pre-pregnancy Weight

Weight Gain During Pregnancy

Normal Weight	25 to 35 pounds
Underweight	28 to 40 pounds
Overweight	15 to 25 pounds
Very Overweight	Less than 15 pounds
Twin pregnancy	35 to 45 pounds

Vitamins

A prenatal vitamin supplement typically includes at least 400mcg of folic acid and not more than 5000 IU of Vitamin A, along with other vitamins, minerals, iron and calcium. The usual calcium requirement is 1000mg per day, which may be obtained from milk, yogurt, dark green leafy vegetables, calcium-fortified orange juice and other sources. If you do not receive that quantity of calcium in your diet, calcium supplementation is recommended. If you are anemic, additional iron supplementation may be recommended.

Fluids

Make sure you drink plenty of water, at least ten 8-ounce glasses a day. Avoid excessive caffeine, as it is a diuretic and can lead to dehydration. We recommend that you limit your intake of caffeinated beverage to ½ cup per day. Aspartame (*NutraSweet*) has not been shown to be harmful if taken in moderation.

Diet Safety

- Never eat raw meat, such as steak tartar, poultry or seafood (especially raw oysters and clams).
- Do not eat raw or undercooked eggs or any food containing them, such as Caesar salads, mousse, some custards, homemade ice cream and homemade mayonnaise.
- Do not drink raw or unpasteurized milk or juices.
- Do not eat soft cheeses, such as Feta, Brie, Camembert, Blue and Mexican-style soft white types, such as queso blanco or queso fresco.
- Avoid foods from deli counters and thoroughly reheat lunch meats and hot dogs.
- Make sure food is well cooked, with no pink in hamburgers, meat, poultry or seafood. Seafood should flake easily.
- Before eating stuffing cooked inside poultry, be sure it has reached 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Limit swordfish, shark, king mackerel, tile fish and fresh tuna, which may contain high levels of mercury.

Herbal Supplements

There are no long-term studies on the safe use of herbs and supplements, however many women choose to use them during pregnancy. For nausea, commonly used herbs include: ginger, chamomile, peppermint and spearmint. Avoid using greater than 1mg per day of ginger, otherwise there are no known ill effects from these herbs. Avoid aloe, black and blue cohosh, dangquai, ephedra, ginseng, goats rue and goldenseal. Echinacea, red raspberryleaf and evening primrose oil are commonly used in pregnancy and have no known ill effects, although long term studies are not available.

“Natural does not necessarily mean “safe”!”

Sexual Activity

Unless you have been identified as having a high-risk pregnancy, you may continue sexual activity up until the time of labor, modified only as needed for comfort.

Smoking

Do not smoke, and limit exposure to secondhand smoke.

Alcohol

The threshold for fetal alcohol syndrome has not been established, so avoid alcohol altogether. Alcohol cooked in foods and sauces does not pose a threat.

If you have further questions about any of these issues, please feel free to discuss them with your doctor at any time. We wish you a healthy successful and enjoyable pregnancy!