

Questions & Sample Answers / ECHO-TV “Prenatal Health”

(Recording Show: Tuesday, August 23/ 2-7 pm @ TPT)

1. What exactly is prenatal health?

- Taking good care of your mind and body while you're pregnant
- Preparing your mind and body for the birth of the baby
- Doing your best to grow a healthy baby

2. What are the important steps to taking care of your body?

- See a health care provider regularly from the beginning of pregnancy through birth
- Eat healthy and exercise regularly throughout your pregnancy
- Don't do dangerous behaviors like smoking or drinking alcohol
- Check your medications and supplements with your providers

3. Who should I go to for my medical care?

- Family practice doctor
- Obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN)
- Certified-nurse midwife
- You can choose a male or female doctor and you can get interpreter services if you need it.

4. What types of food should pregnant women eat?

- Foods from each of the five food groups every day (grains, vegetables, fruits, milk products and proteins)
- **Vitamins and minerals, such as folic acid and calcium.**
- Check with your health care provider how much weight is healthy for you to gain, and how vitamins and any medication will affect your baby

5. What foods should pregnant women avoid?

- Avoid fish high in mercury. Usually larger fish that eat smaller fish as this increases mercury concentration.
- Raw vegetable sprouts (including alfalfa, clover, radish and mung bean) and undercooked meats and eggs
- Fast food that is high in fat and salt
- Deli meats and some soft cheeses because they contain listeria

6. There has been a recent increase in gestational diabetes across all cultures, why is it and how can we avoid it?

- The growing placenta can make the body act like someone with diabetes. It can create a high risk pregnancy.

HOST: Can women avoid getting gestational diabetes?

- Having a healthy weight and diet before and during the pregnancy. Talk with your provider or nutritionist how many carbohydrates (noodles, rice, and tortillas) it is healthy to eat.
- Try to avoid American fast foods like cheeseburgers, fries, pizza, and junk food like chips, etc.

HOST: Does gestational diabetes go away after the pregnancy?

- Typically gestational diabetes resolves after the pregnancy, Your provider will monitor you after the delivery.

7. Are there things to avoid in the environment?

- Changing cat litter
- Hot baths, hot tubs and saunas
- Lead exposure from old pipes and faucets
- Pesticides and certain chemicals like excessive household cleaning products (check labels)

6. Should pregnant women get a flu shot?

- Yes! It is important protection for baby and mother
- Pregnancy increases the risk of flu complications, such as bacterial pneumonia and dehydration
- Pregnancy can change a woman's immune system and affect her heart and lungs

7. Why is exercise important?

- Increases energy
- Builds stamina for delivery
- Relieves stress
- Manages weight gain

8. How much exercise should pregnant women get?

- At least 2 1/2 hours of aerobic exercise every week (30 minutes/day)
- Walking, swimming, dancing
- Stop if you're feeling sick or having contractions

10. Why is it so important to have regular health care provider appointments?

- Make sure you and the baby are healthy
- See if you need any vaccinations
- Offer advice about your pregnancy
- Help you connect to resources

11. What are some danger signs women should look out for?

- Bleeding or water coming out of the vagina before 36 weeks. After that day it may represent the beginning of labor.
- More than 5 painful contractions in an hour
- No fetal movement or a change in movement
- If your blood pressure is being high during pregnancy, check for bad headaches that do not go away when with Tylenol and uncomfortable swelling not only in ankles, but also hands and face.
- Keep your provider's number handy. If you have any of these signs or other concerns – CALL.

12. We know it's important to have support during prenatal care, what are some prenatal support resources?

- Rely on friends and family for support and learn from their experiences
- Attend prenatal childbirth preparation and parenting classes with a partner, friend or family member
- Go to counseling or support groups
- Read about pregnancy, childbirth, newborn care and parenting in books or on the Internet

13. What kind of emotional changes can pregnant women expect?

- 1 in 5 pregnant women show signs of depression
- Therapy, support groups and medications can help
- Talk to your provider

- Having a child is a significant life changing event that can be wonderful as well as stressful

14. How can we cover the cost of prenatal care? What if you don't have insurance?

- If you have insurance find out what your plan covers
- If you don't have insurance there are programs available – even if you do not have documents: Look for a social worker in your clinic.
 - Government Supported, MNCare or Medical Assistance
 - Community Health Clinic, Public Health Organization
- WIC for nutrition (they do not check your status)
- Come for care and do not be afraid, we will help you navigate the system – the child comes first.

15. What kinds of special needs might mother's need for support during prenatal care?

- A close family member or friend to go to appointments, prenatal classes, and be supportive during the pregnancy
- If you find yourself in any situation of violence talk to your provider about it

16. What kind of specific needs are there in the _____ culture?

- Vitamins will not make your baby grow too large
- Hot peppers, lemons will not harm your baby
- Herbal medications – check with your doctor to make sure they are safe supplements to take