



DO'S & DON'TS DURING YOUR PREGNANCY

THINGS TO DO:

- **Be excited:** Relax and enjoy the pregnancy. Share your experience with your friends and family.
- **Make an appointment with an Ob/Gyn:** An appointment between 6-10 weeks from your last menstrual period is ideal.
- **Take prenatal vitamins:** These should include at least 400 mcg of folic acid to help prevent fetal brain and spine abnormalities.
- **Consider DHA or Omega-3 fatty acids:** These can be good for fetal brain development.
- **Know your genetic history:** It is important to share details with your doctor.
- **Rest more:** Sleep an extra hour every night and alternate activities with rest breaks.
- **Get regular exercise:** 30 minutes a day is ideal. You may maintain previous exercise routines, but do not start a new vigorous activity. Maintain a manageable heart rate. Walking, swimming, and prenatal yoga are great activities.
- **Wear seat belts:** Seat belts should be worn low, under your tummy, and across your hipbone.
- **Take care of your teeth:** Gently brush and floss daily. See your dentist regularly. It is common to have bleeding gums during pregnancy. This can be decreased by rinsing with warm salt water.
- **Get educated:** Find out as much as you can about pregnancy, labor and delivery, breastfeeding, infant and child care, and parenting. Hospitals offer courses, libraries have books and videos, and many websites can be helpful resources.
- **Eat healthy:** Maintain a healthy and balanced diet. Good nutrition will be helpful throughout your pregnancy.
- **Drink fluids:** Water is ideal to stay hydrated, but drink at least 8-10 glasses of water, juice, or milk daily.
- **Limit Morning Sickness:** Eat small frequent meals 6-8 times a day. Try Tums, ginger, or vitamin B6 to decrease nausea.
- **Sex:** Continue lovemaking if it is comfortable for you and you are not experiencing signs of preterm labor, bleeding, or cramping.
- **Get your flu shot:** It is safe and recommended for all pregnant women in any trimester.

THINGS TO AVOID:

- **Medications:** Limit or avoid all medications unless discussed with your doctor.
- **Herbs:** Although some herbs are safe in pregnancy, check with your doctor before taking any.
- **Toxic fumes and chemicals:** Use paint and chemicals in well ventilated areas and wear gloves when using chemicals.
- **Too much exercise:** Avoid heavy lifting, contact sports, and unusual activities without proper preparation. Eliminate high risk activities such as snow/water skiing, snowboarding, and scuba diving.
- **Hot tubs:** Water should not exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Xrays:** If necessary, be sure to wear an abdominal shield.
- **Caffeine:** Eliminate or reduce to one small cup a day as it can cause miscarriage and other problems.
- **Alcohol:** Causes birth defects and there is no safe level so it is best to avoid entirely.
- **Smoking:** Direct and second hand smoke may cause complications in pregnancy, labor and delivery. It can be a primary cause of preterm labor and birth. Wean off any tobacco.
- **Recreational Drugs:** Avoid all illicit substances as they cause birth defects and pregnancy complications.
- **Douching:** Douching can destroy the "good" bacteria in you vagina and allow "bad" bacteria to overgrow into an infection.
- **Cat litter boxes:** Cat feces can carry a disease that can be harmful to your baby.
- **Raw meat, fish, lunch meats, eggs, and soft cheeses:** Limit fish to two servings per week, cook all meats and eggs thoroughly, and avoid unpasteurized soft cheeses.