

# *Prenatal Recommendations*

## **Exercise**

Recreational exercise is good in pregnancy, so plan to continue your regular exercise program during pregnancy. Walking, bike riding, low impact aerobics, treadmill programs, weights and weight machines (except abdominal exercises), jogging and swimming are all OK. There are good pregnancy home exercise tapes available and there are special prenatal classes at the YMCA and yoga studios.

The most important things about exercise in pregnancy are:

**Don't do intensive training in pregnancy.** A good level of exercise is about 60% of your maximum effort. This keeps the heart rate below 140-150 beats per minute. You should be able to talk during this exercise and not be completely out of breath.

**Keep hydrated.** Drink before, during, and after exercise. Dehydration can cause uterine contractions.

**Don't get overheated.** Remember that the baby's temperature is always about a degree higher than your body temperature. There is concern that high temperatures can cause birth defects so make sure you wear appropriate clothing and can regulate the temperature when you exercise.

**Be careful about your balance in pregnancy.** Because of the ligaments and tendons become more lax in late pregnancy, it is easier to strain muscles and joints. Weight gain and a lower center of gravity can change your balance in many activities. These instructions may be changed if there are any problems like bleeding or pre-term labor. Please ask for advice if you have any questions about your activities in pregnancy.

## **Diet**

Total weight gain recommended for pregnancy is 25 to 35 lb. Try to gain only about 1/3 of the total in the first 20 weeks, or about 10 to 12 lb. If you gain most of the weight between 20 weeks and 40 weeks, most of it will go to the baby and that will be less you have to lose after delivery. Drink plenty of water. 8 to 10 cups per day is recommended in addition to liquids in foods. If you exercise regularly you'll need more. It is recommended that you take 1 prenatal vitamin and 1 iron supplement everyday. We will be glad to provide a prescription for prenatal vitamins. If you like to use non-prescription supplements, such as those from health food stores, and brand is fine as long as it is labeled "prenatal vitamin," it will have the extra daily requirements you need in pregnancy.

Saccharine is not recommended in pregnancy. Nutra-Sweet and caffeine have

not been shown to cause birth defects, however both can suppress your appetite so use them in moderation. It is better to eat something nutritious. Also your body is slower to metabolize caffeine during pregnancy: so drinking one cup of caffeinated beverage is like drinking 2 cups when you're not pregnant, so you would be more likely to have symptoms of rapid heartbeat or sleeplessness when you use caffeine in pregnancy. Avoid alcohol on a regular basis, especially in the first trimester. In the second and third trimester 1/2 glass of wine or beer on a special occasion is OK.

## **Dairy**

At least 3 servings per day, 1 cup of milk, yogurt, 2 cups of cottage cheese or 2 slices of cheese contain about 500 mg of calcium. If you don't like dairy other sources of calcium include: 2 cups broccoli, bok choy, turnip greens, collard greens, 2 slices soy cheese, 1 cup soy milk or soy yogurt, 1 cup tofu, 3/4 cup of rice milk or orange juice, 1 cup canned mackerel, 1/2 cup canned salmon, or 5 sardines. If you are still concerned about your calcium intake it is OK to take calcium tablets, and the recommended dose is 1500 mg (3-4 tablets) per day. Remember to take the calcium tablets with food because they are absorbed better. Calcium citrate (Citrical) tablets sometimes cause less bloating than calcium carbonate (Oscal).

Use only pasteurized dairy products because raw dairy products can be contaminated with Listeria, and infection that can cause miscarriage or fetal death. Imported soft cheeses are most likely to be contaminated. Hard cheese is not a problem. Almost all-domestic cheese, both soft and hard, are pasteurized and are safe: read the label.

## **Protein**

3 servings per day. Good sources are chicken, turkey, lean red meat, and fish. Make sure the Chicken and turkey are well cooked because some food poisoning (Salmonella and Listeria) can be dangerous to the pregnancy. If you are vegetarian and eat dairy and eggs you will probably not have any problem getting all the protein you need. If you don't eat any animal products, you will need to be very careful to put enough high protein food in your diet for pregnancy.