



Thomas Henley, MD
Todd Meisinger, MD
Kathy Richardson, MD
Jody Bovard, MD
Kathy Harris, WHNP
Susan Lineberry, WHNP
Eve Key, FNP

COMMON PREGNANCY QUESTIONS

What will happen at my first appointment?

Usually around 8-9 weeks of your pregnancy (dating from the first day of your last menstrual period), the sonographer will perform a vaginal ultrasound to check the pregnancy for normal development and confirm your due date. The baby is very small at this point (1-2.5 centimeters) and has just developed a heartbeat. A long, thin ultrasound probe will be placed in your vagina to see the baby through the uterine wall. It does not hurt. Either around this time or the same day, you will see the Assistant to go over history and the Doctor for an OB Workup – this includes personal history, family history, a full physical including pelvic exam and blood work.

What if I am on medicines or have medical problems when I get pregnant?

You should notify the assistant who confirms your pregnancy test in our office as soon as possible if you are on any prescription medications – you will be told what to do regarding these medications. Do not simply stop your medications unless you are advised to do so, as this may be harmful to you and the baby. Also, notify the assistant if you have any medical problems such as diabetes or high blood pressure (hypertension); or if you have had any pregnancy complications such as a tubal pregnancy. The assistant will notify the doctor; you may need to be seen sooner.

Which doctor will I be seeing?

If you are already a patient of our practice, your primary physician will be the one you always see for your gynecological exams. During the pregnancy, you will rotate among all four physicians. During the last month of your pregnancy, you will see your primary physician. If a cesarean section or an induction of labor is scheduled, your primary physician would be the one to deliver your baby. If you come in laboring, the physician on-call will deliver your baby.

What is the First Trimester screening?

At your first visits, you will be offered optional testing to screen for the risk of Down Syndrome and Trisomy 18. First Trimester screening is done between 12-13 ½ weeks. It includes an ultrasound measurement of the skin fold at the back of the baby's neck and blood work. In the second trimester, you will also be offered optional testing to screen for the risk of open spine and open brain defects. This test is done by blood work only. Both of these optional tests are safe for mother and baby.

What can I do about the nausea and vomiting in the first weeks?

Not every pregnant woman gets sick in the first trimester but many women do. The baby will usually do a fine job of growing even if you feel like you keep down very little food. The developing fetus is very tiny and requires few calories; these can usually be supplied by what your body has already stored. You will feel better if you eat mini-meals every 2-3 hours, even if you don't feel hungry. Also, try to increase protein intake - found in foods like meat, peanut butter, and cheese. Dehydration can occur easily. You should notify our office if you cannot keep any fluids down for 24 hours or if you stop urinating.

Do I need prenatal vitamins?

If you eat a healthy diet you will likely meet the nutritional needs of the pregnancy. Prenatal vitamins will ensure that you get the recommended amount of folic acid that helps the baby's spine and brain develop normally. Over the counter prenatal vitamins are usually fine. Check the label to be sure there is not too much of some ingredients such as Vitamin A (should be less than 150% of the RDA – 5,000 IU). If you are unable to take your prenatal vitamins because of nausea and vomiting, you may take over the counter folic acid 400mcg per day.

What activities are safe?

Normal exercise, such as walking and swimming, are fine. Do not start an aggressive new exercise regimen but you may continue your current one. Having sexual intercourse with your partner is safe, assuming you are in a monogamous relationship. Having multiple partners, or a partner with multiple partners, could expose you to sexually transmitted infections which may be harmful to the baby.

May I go to the dentist while I am pregnant?

You can not only go to the dentist, but you SHOULD! Healthy teeth and gums have been identified as a factor that may reduce preterm labor. If you require dental procedures that require local injections with Lidocaine, this is safe.

This is by no means a complete list of questions you will have during the pregnancy. During business hours, we are happy to answer any other questions you may have. It is a good idea to write non-urgent questions down and bring the list to appointments. If you have a true emergency that needs immediate attention, the physician on call may be paged after hours (call the office number 336-854-8800 and the message will let you know who is on call and how to reach them). We look forward to enjoying your pregnancy with you!