

Detroit Medical Center Pregnancy Health Information



Even with all the joy and anticipation pregnancy can bring, a mother-to-be may have questions and concerns about changes to expect throughout her pregnancy, and the care of her body to ensure the health of her unborn child.

Prenatal Medical Care

As soon as a woman discovers she is pregnant, she should establish a schedule of prenatal care with her physician for the entire duration of the pregnancy. For normal pregnancies without significant complications, prenatal exams are usually scheduled as follows:

- every month from the 1st week through the 28th week
- every two weeks from the 29th week through the 36th week
- weekly from the 37th week until delivery

This schedule may vary depending on your personal medical condition and your physician's preference. Additional prenatal care may be necessary if there are any preexisting medical conditions (i.e., diabetes) present in the mother and/or if complications arise while carrying the baby to term.

The goal of prenatal care is not only to provide the best care for the pregnant woman and the unborn child, but also to prepare the mother-to-be for the delivery of a healthy baby. During prenatal visits, tests are performed on both the mother and the baby to assess any potential risks, to treat any maternal or fetal complications, and to monitor the growth and development of the fetus. In addition, counseling and guidance are provided regarding various aspects of pregnancy, including weight gain, exercise, nutrition, and overall health.

Nutrition During Pregnancy

According to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), about 300 extra calories are needed daily to maintain a healthy pregnancy. These calories should come from a balanced diet of protein, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains with sweets and fats kept to a minimum. A healthy, well-balanced diet during pregnancy can also help to minimize some pregnancy symptoms such as nausea and constipation.

Fluid intake is also an important part of healthy pregnancy nutrition. Women can take in enough fluids by drinking six to eight glasses of water each day, in addition to the fluids in juices and soups. An expectant mother should talk with her physician about restricting her intake of caffeine and artificial sweeteners. All alcohol should be avoided in pregnancy.

If you are concerned about pregnancy health, discuss it with your doctor. If you do not have a doctor, the DMC can find one for you. Call 888-DMC-2500 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.

