

HEALTH TRACKS

A Newsletter From Local Public Health to Improve the Health of Families in NW Minnesota



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

SECOND TRIMESTER



GREETINGS!

Welcome to your second trimester. By now you have probably adjusted to the idea of being pregnant and are starting to show. You can wear the same size maternity clothes as you do when you are not pregnant. The second trimester is full of exciting changes.

YOUR HEALTH CARE



During the 4th-6th months of pregnancy you should visit your medical care provider each month unless (s)he wants to see you more often. You should now be able to hear your baby's heartbeat each time you go. You may have also seen your baby by ultrasound around 20 weeks. Routine blood tests may be done at this time.

PHYSICAL CHANGES IN YOUR BODY

Your body is continuing to change. Here are some things you may notice:

- ◆ if you had nausea, it should be less
- ◆ your belly is growing
- ◆ you do not have to go to the bathroom as often because your baby has moved up in your uterus
- ◆ you can feel the baby moving (starts around middle of the 5th month and feels like a "flutter")
- ◆ your breasts are growing and you may need a larger bra
- ◆ you have constipation
- ◆ you have hemorrhoids
- ◆ stretch marks on your belly
- ◆ you have sore back

YOUR BABY'S GROWTH

During 4 - 6 months of pregnancy your baby will:

- ◆ have all organs formed, many are working
- ◆ be 6-7" long & weigh 8 oz in the 4th month
- ◆ by the 6th month, will be 12" long & weigh 1 - 1½ pounds
- ◆ open & close eyes
- ◆ hear sounds
- ◆ stretch, kick, suck thumb
- ◆ may have hiccups
- ◆ have fingernails and toenails forming

WEIGHT GAIN DURING PREGNANCY

You should be gaining at least 1 pound every week because your baby is growing fast.

PRETERM LABOR

Some women start having contractions that could lead to a baby being born too early. Pay attention if you have any of the following:

- ❖ cramps that feel like a period, may come & go
- ❖ abdominal cramps with or without diarrhea
- ❖ backache below the waist that stays or comes & goes
- ❖ pelvic pressure that feels like baby is pushing down on vagina
- ❖ 4 or more uterine contractions in 1 hour
- ❖ increase or change in vaginal discharge

If you have any of these signs:

1. Drink 2-3 glasses of water or juice
2. Lie down on your left side
3. Count how often you have contractions

If you have contractions every 10 minutes or less, have more than 4 contractions in 1 hour, or continue to have any of the other symptoms, call your health care provider, clinic, or emergency room at the hospital right away.

WARNING SIGNS

If you have any of these signs, report them to your health care provider right away:

- ❖ bleeding from the vagina
- ❖ severe/constant nausea or vomiting
- ❖ swelling of face or hands, or lots of swelling in feet or ankles
- ❖ blurred vision
- ❖ see spots
- ❖ chills or fever
- ❖ sharp or continuous pain in your abdomen
- ❖ sudden gush or steady leak of water from the vagina
- ❖ a large decrease in passing urine



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

It is important for you to take care of yourself and your growing baby, remember the following tips:

DO:

- ◆ Take a prenatal vitamin.
- ◆ Eat a well-balanced diet
- ◆ Wear seat belts throughout your pregnancy
- ◆ Get some exercise, like walks, but do not overdo it, rest when you feel tired.
- ◆ See your health care provider as often as (s)he recommends.



DO NOT:

- ◆ smoke
- ◆ uses drugs
- ◆ drink beer, wine, or liquor
- ◆ take any medicine without discussing it with your health care provider (even aspirin or Tylenol)
- ◆ drink more than 2-3 caffeine drinks/day (coffee, tea, colas, hot chocolate)
- ◆ eat raw meat

STAY AWAY FROM:

- x-rays
- lead (found in old paint)
- sauna and hot tubs

DECISIONS

Now is a good time to decide if you are going to breast or bottle feed your baby. If you need information, please call me.

PREPARING YOUR OTHER CHILDREN FOR THE NEW ARRIVAL

No matter how well you have tried to prepare your children for a new sibling, chances are good that they will feel some jealousy after the baby comes home. If you would like more information on preparing children for new siblings, please call me.

FEEDING YOURSELF AND YOUR BABY

Don't forget to eat a well-balanced diet.



If you crave or eat nonfood items like clay, dirt, paper, etc. tell your health care provider. If you have problems with constipation, drink 6 glasses of fluid every day and eat lots of fruits, vegetables, and bran/whole grain breads and cereals.

CHILDBIRTH CLASSES

There are many things to learn about your pregnancy, labor and delivery. It's very helpful to take childbirth classes with someone who will be with you during labor at the hospital. Classes are offered at your hospital, college or public health agency.

I hope you have enjoyed this newsletter. Please feel free to call if you have any questions. Please call if you have a change of address or phone number so you can continue to receive these newsletters. Meanwhile, enjoy this special time in your life.



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