

# Becton Women's Clinic

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This pregnancy fact sheet has been designed to help ease your questions and anxiety about what to expect during your pregnancy. Should you have any further questions not mentioned here, please contact us.

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- The initial blood work ordered is called a 'prenatal panel'. It consists of many different tests including: blood type, iron level, thyroid function, hepatitis C, hepatitis B, HIV, syphilis and a urine culture. Some of the results will be back in the same day. Others take 5-7 days to come back. **We will call if anything comes back abnormal.** If you do not receive a call, all of the results are normal.
- An ultrasound will be ordered at your first prenatal visit. This ultrasound is to confirm the baby's due date. Another ultrasound will be done at about 20 weeks. The purpose of this one is to make sure that the baby is growing properly. It is at this time most people find out the gender of the baby.
- During your first appointment with Dr. Becton, you will get a full physical exam. This consists of listening to your heart and lungs, feeling the glands and your thyroid located in your neck, a breast exam, a Pap smear, pelvic exam, and gonorrhea and Chlamydia cultures.
- There are 40 weeks in a pregnancy, 10 calendar months, and nine lunar months. It all adds up to be the same thing.
- We can hear the baby's heartbeat here in the office starting at 12 weeks. After you reach this point, we will listen to the heartbeat at every appointment.
- Some cramping can be normal. It is not usually a concern unless the pain is worse than a period cramp or is accompanied with bleeding.
- Between 16-21 weeks, an optional blood test will be done. This test is sometimes called a MSAFP, Triple Screen, or Quad Screen. It looks at the hormones and proteins in your blood to assess your risk of having a child with Down's syndrome, open neural tube defect, and Trisomy 18. This test is for screening only. If it comes back positive, it does not mean that your baby will have a birth defect. When a test comes back positive, the mother will go to UAMS in Little Rock, AR. for a detailed ultrasound and genetic counseling. You can decline this test if you choose. If you do decide to do this test, it takes 7-10 days for the results to come back. **We will contact you if the result is positive.** Otherwise, no news is good news.
- During pregnancy, a woman's cervix becomes very vascular. This means that any impact can irritate the cervix and cause spotting. You may have some spotting up to 72 hours after intercourse, a Pap smear, or a pelvic exam.
- It is normal to experience an increase in vaginal discharge.
- Round ligament pain is a very common problem during pregnancy. It can occur at any time during pregnancy. It is sometimes a sharp pain or dull ache located above your pelvic bone. The round ligaments are stretching and hold up the uterus on both sides. As the baby

grows, it pulls on the round ligaments and causes pain. Activity often aggravates it and resting improves the pain.

- Sexual activity is safe during most pregnancies. You will be told if you should avoid intercourse. Intercourse will not hurt the baby or the mother. You should not have sex if you are experiencing vaginal bleeding or you think that your water may have broken.
- At 28 weeks, we will order a test called a glucose tolerance test. You will drink a sweet orange soda. An hour after you drink it, your blood will be drawn. This test evaluates how well your body tolerates large amounts of sugar. If you fail the 1<sup>st</sup> test, a 3 hour version will be ordered to rule out gestational diabetes. We will also check your iron level at this time and the Rhogam shot will be given if your blood type is RH negative.
- Exercise is safe and is encouraged. However, you should not lift anything over 20 lbs. The better shape that you are in during the pregnancy, the easier the delivery will be. Please do not over do it. You are the best judge of what you can and cannot do.
- Most pregnant women can work throughout their entire pregnancy. Some even work the day before the baby is born. Unless you are told otherwise, the only restriction that you have is that you cannot lift anything over 20lbs. If you need a note stating this, please ask a nurse.
- Even though you are eating for two, you do not need to double what you eat. A pregnant woman only needs to add 300 calories to her diet.
- Cats can carry an organism that causes a disease called toxoplasmosis. It is passed through feces. This disease is very harmful when pregnant. Please DO NOT change cat litter and be sure to wash your hands after handling cats.
- Travel is safe until the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. This begins at 24 weeks. After you're past this 24 weeks, please let us know where you are going so that we can confirm that it is safe for you to travel.
- Tobacco should be avoided during pregnancy. It can lead to premature labor and low birth weight. Smoking during pregnancy also raises the risk of the baby developing asthma and dying of SIDS.
- Alcohol is also dangerous and may cause birth defects.
- Illegal drugs are VERY harmful! They can lead to birth defects and an addicted baby! You can be drug tested. Under Garrett's Law, any mother of a newborn that tests positive for drugs are considered to be guilty of endangerment and neglect. Medical personnel are required to report them to police and child protective service workers.
- Please wear your seat belt when pregnant.
- Child birth classes are available at the hospital. We recommend that you participate in these classes. If you do not have a schedule, please ask a nurse for one.
- It is ok for you to get your hair done, your nails done, and lay on a tanning bed. Some places do require a doctor's note.
- Medicaid and most insurance only pay for 2 routine ultrasounds.
- It is safe for you to get a TB skin test.

- It is safe for you to get a flu shot. (No nasal sprays. Only the injection). It is recommended that if you work around high risk groups such as the elderly and children.
- If you are considering getting your tubes tied, please discuss this with a nurse or Dr. Becton. If you have Medicaid, you must be at least 21 years old and have the consent form signed at least 30 days before it can be done.
- Once the baby becomes frequently active, around 26-30 weeks, you should feel the baby move at least once every hour while you are awake. If you notice that you feel the baby less than this you may require additional monitoring.
- There are many aches and pains that are normal during pregnancy. IF you are having any problems, please call and talk with a nurse to confirm that it is normal.

### YOUR LAST MONTH

- At 35 weeks, you need to pre-register at the hospital. You can do this at the admission office. You will need to bring your insurance information and you will need to know who you want as the baby's doctor.
- Dehydration can cause false contractions, so drink lots of water.
- Braxton-Hicks contractions are common. They are considered to be false because they do not cause the cervix to dilate. They are like practice contractions because they get the uterus ready for the real thing. They can range from very painful to completely painless. They are often affected by changing positions. If you begin to experience Braxton-Hicks contractions, drink a large glass of water and try lying on your left side. This will normally make them go away or become less intense.
- You may notice that you have passed a slimy blood tinged mucus called the mucus plug. This is normal and expected. After you pass the plug, it can be a matter of hours, days, weeks or months before you go into labor.
- If you are having a boy, you need to decide if you want him circumcised. Circumcision can be done by Dr. Becton or the child's pediatrician.
- You need to consider whether or not breast feeding or bottle feeding is right for you. While breastfeeding does have clear advantages, both are good choices.
- Your work may require a letter of FMLA forms to allow you to begin maternity leave. Please let us know so we can help you.
- You **must** have a car seat before the hospital will allow you to take the baby home.
- There are many different choices for pain relief during delivery including epidural and IV pain medications.
- A vaginal culture will be done to check for bacteria called the group B strep. This bacteria grows in the intestines and is harmless in adults. It is not sexually transmitted and you do not 'catch it' any particular way. If you have it, and it is not treated, the baby can be exposed to it during birth. Because the baby does not have a mature immune system it can cause lung problems. If the culture comes back positive, you will need an antibiotic during delivery to get rid of the bacteria. If you have had the bacteria in the past, you will need

to be treated regardless of the results. Once a person has had group B strep they are likely to have it again.

- It is optional to have your pubic area shaved at the time of delivery. You can choose to shave it at home, have a nurse at the hospital to shave you, or you can skip it altogether. The upside to being shaved is it helps the doctor see the birth canal much clearer.
- It is also your choice if you want an enema. The birth canal is located directly above the intestines. Sometimes when a woman bears down to push the baby out, feces are also pushed out. If you decide that you want an enema, it can be done at the hospital. If you are scheduled for an induction, you can do the enema at home the day before you are scheduled to go to the hospital. **DO NOT** do this any sooner than instructed. Fleet enemas can be found by the constipation medicines at pharmacies and drug stores.
- During the delivery, the hospital allows up to 2 people to be in the room. This is the hospital's rule, not ours. Sorry for any inconvenience.
- If you should require a C-Section, only one person will be allowed in the room.

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your pregnancy!

**Dr. Becton and Staff**  
Becton Women's Clinic.