



Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Baby!

Published by:



Obstetrical and Gynaecological
Society of Malaysia



National Midwives' Society
Malaysia



Nutrition Society of
Malaysia



Malaysian Paediatric Association
PERSATUAN PEDIATRIK
MALAYSIA

Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Baby!

Having a baby is one of life's greatest miracles.

Congratulations and welcome on board this exciting and heart-warming journey towards parenthood!

If this is your first pregnancy, it's only natural to feel anxious and concerned over what you will experience. But by learning and empowering yourself with accurate information on pregnancy and infant care, the unknown can be easily countered!



Frequency of Antenatal Visits



Primigravida – 1st pregnancy (weeks)	Multigravida – twice or more pregnancies before (weeks)
12	12
18	20
24	28
28	32
32	36
36	38
37	40
38	
39	
40	

Common Discomforts During Pregnancy

It is normal to experience some discomfort during pregnancy. Here's how you can ease them.

Discomforts	Why Do I Experience It?
Cramps	Painful muscle contractions in your calves, especially at night.
Oedema	Swelling of the feet.
Varicose veins	Enlarged, protruding, bluish veins, particularly in the legs.
Fatigue	The body works overtime to provide a nourishing environment for the foetus
Nausea and vomiting	Changes in hormone levels during pregnancy
Backache	As a woman's weight increases, her balance changes, therefore, straining her back.
Heartburn & indigestion	Pressure on the intestines and stomach (which, in turn, pushes stomach contents back up into the esophagus)
Hemorrhoids	Increased pressure on the rectum and perineum, and the increased likelihood of becoming constipated as the pregnancy progresses



What You Can Do To Ease Problems

- Massage the affected muscles.
- Walk around for a moment once the pain has eased to improve blood circulation.
- Eat more foods that contain calcium, such as milk and dairy products.
- Take calcium supplements (please consult your doctor before taking any supplements).

Lift up legs when at rest.

- Plan naps and rest times throughout the day.
- Avoid caffeine

- Eat low-fat, bland foods that can be digested easily.
- Drink plenty of plain water in between meals

- Pelvic tilt exercises
- Comfortable, flat & padded shoes
- Back rubs

- Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day
- Avoid overeating, greasy, strongly seasoned and spicy foods
- Take lots of plain water in between meals, rather than with meals

- High-fiber diet
- Ice packs, topical ointments, tucks pads

Most pregnancies go well without any major problems. But, it is wise to reduce any risks as much as possible. These are a reminder of things to consider before becoming pregnant, or as soon as you realise that you are pregnant.

Things you should do:

- Have a blood test to check if you are immune against rubella, and to screen for hepatitis B, syphilis, and HIV. Ask your practice nurse for more information.
- Eat a healthy diet. Include foods rich in iron, calcium and folic acid. Also, some oily fish.
- Practise strict food hygiene. In particular, wash your hands before you prepare food and after handling raw meat, or handling pets.
- Wear gloves when you are gardening.



Things you should avoid:

- Too much vitamin A - don't eat liver products, or take vitamin A supplements.
- Listeriosis - don't eat undercooked meat or eggs, soft cheese, pâté, shellfish, raw fish, or unpasteurised milk.
- Fish which may contain a lot of mercury - shark, marlin, swordfish, or excess tuna.
- Sheep, lambs, cat faeces, cat litters, and raw meat which may carry certain infections.

Things you should stop or cut down:

- Caffeine (in tea, coffee, cola) - have no more than 200 mg per day. This is about two mugs of instant coffee, or one mug of brewed coffee and a 50 g bar of plain chocolate, or two and a half mugs of tea.
- Alcohol - you are strongly advised not to drink at all.

- Smoking and street drugs - you are strongly advised to stop immediately.
- Liquorice - reduce your intake if you eat a lot of it.

Other things to consider:

- Your iodine intake and perhaps discuss with your doctor about iodine supplements.
- Immunisation against hepatitis B if you are at an increased risk of getting this infection.
- Immunisation against chickenpox if you are a healthcare worker and have not previously had chickenpox and so are not immune.
- Your medication - including herbal and 'over-the-counter' medicines. Are they safe?
- Your work environment - is it safe?
- Medical conditions in yourself, or conditions which run in your family.
- Screening tests for sickle cell and thalassaemia.



What Mums Should Expect Through the Trimesters

1st Trimester:

Conditions	How to cope
Sensitive breasts (due to increase in hormone production)	- Wear supportive bras.
Nausea & vomiting (due to hormonal changes)	- Eat small, frequent meals. - Eat low-fat foods - Drink fluids in between meals, instead of during meals.
	
Fatigue	- Get sufficient rest. - Ensure enough iron and protein intake from food.
Urinary frequency (due to enlarging uterus that presses on the bladder)	- Drink less in the evening.
Heartburn (stomach now takes longer to empty)	- Eat small frequent meals. - Avoid fried food and fizzy drinks.
Constipation	- Include plenty of fibre in your diet. - Drink lots of fluids. - Regular physical activity.
Dizziness (due to circulatory changes, stress, fatigue and hunger)	- Avoid prolonged standing. - Rise slowly after lying or sitting down. - Sit or lie down.

2nd Trimester:

Conditions	How to cope
Bigger breasts	- Continue wearing supportive bras.
Nasal and gum problems (due to increased blood circulation)	- Use a softer toothbrush to protect gums.
Itchy stretch marks	- Apply moisturizers, and avoid scratching.
Contractions in the lower abdomen (Braxton Hicks contractions), usually weak, and come and go unpredictably	- If the contractions become painful or regular, contact your doctor immediately. It may be a sign of pre-term labour.
Leg cramps (due to pressure from the uterus)	- Stretch the affected muscles.
Thin, white vaginal discharge (a natural acidic discharge that may help suppress the growth of potentially harmful bacteria or yeast)	- Wear panty liners for comfort. - If discharge becomes strong smelling, green or yellowish, accompanied by redness, itching or irritation, see your doctor. It may indicate a vaginal infection.

3rd Trimester:

Condition	How to cope
Getting breathless easily (because uterus expands and pushes diaphragm)	- Lie slightly to the lateral when sleeping. - Maintain good postures.
Heartburn (bigger uterus pushes on stomach)	- Eat small, frequent meals. - Avoid fried foods, spicy foods. - Drink plain water in between meals.
Varicose veins and haemorrhoids (due to increased blood circulation)	- Wear support stockings. - Avoid constipation by including plenty of fibre in the diet and drink lots of water.

Routine Antenatal Care

Examinations	What is determined?
Medical History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall health & lifestyle - Health of mother's & father's family
Physical Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Height - Heart & lung performance - Dental health - Breast lumps & inverted nipples - Blood pressure - Pelvic organs: cervix, vagina, ovaries, fallopian tubes & uterus
Blood tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blood types: A, B, AB or O - Rhesus blood group: positive or negative - Haemoglobin level (for identifying anaemia) - Past rubella (German measles) - Hepatitis B antibodies - HIV antibodies
Other tests (if required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sexually transmitted diseases
Body weight measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sudden excessive gain: a sign of pre-eclampsia, if gain occurs in late pregnancy
Palpitation (pressing with the fingertips) of the legs, ankles and hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excessive swelling: a sign of pre-eclampsia
Blood Pressure Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised blood pressure (above 140/90): a sign of pre-eclampsia
Urine tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traces of sugar (which may necessitate an Oral Glucose Tolerance Test if diabetes is suspected) - Traces of protein: a sign of pre-eclampsia, if found in late pregnancy - Presence of infections

Examinations	What is determined?
Baby's Heartbeat (after week 14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible foetal problems
Ultrasound scan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The presence of a heartbeat - The number of foetuses present - The age of the foetus (how far along the pregnancy is) - Absence of foetus (known as a missed abortion) - Abnormal pregnancy (e.g. ectopic pregnancy where the foetus develops outside the uterus) - Miscarriage - To check that foetus's heart, brain, other organs & limbs are developing normally - To check that foetus is structurally normal





Programme Owners:

Collaborator:
(Content Provider)



Obstetrical and Gynaecological
Society of Malaysia



National Midwives' Society
Malaysia



Nutrition Society of
Malaysia



Malaysian Paediatric
Association

The Mi-CARE programme, a wholly Experts' based initiative, is spearheaded by the following Professional Bodies: Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Malaysia (OGSM), Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM), National Midwives' Society Malaysia (NMSM) and Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA). This programme is a training and education programme for nurses, nurse aides and midwives from private and government O&G, paediatric clinics and maternity centres, empowering them with relevant information on pregnancy, labour, birth and post-partum care so that they can provide accurate information and advice to expectant or new mothers.

Have any questions or concerns on your pregnancy?
Need professional advice on your
health whilst pregnant?

Fret not, the Mi-CARE Advisory Centre is here to help!

CALL OUR TOLL-FREE

1-800-88-9033

(Mon – Fri: 10.00am to 5.00pm)

Mi-CARE Secretariat:

VERSACOMM

12-A, Jalan PJS 8/4, Mentari Plaza,
Bandar Sunway, 46150 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Tel: (03) 5632 3301 Fax: 03-5638 9909