



## First Trimester of Pregnancy Education and Safety

Please review this handout and call our office at 207-874-2445 with any specific questions or concerns.

### Food Safety

Food safety is important in pregnancy because pregnant people have a suppressed immune system and are both more likely to get food-borne illnesses and to get quite sick from these illnesses, and in some cases these infections can get to baby and cause serious pregnancy complications. Here are our recommendations:

- Practice regular hand washing before eating.
- Eggs, fish, and meat should be cooked thoroughly.
- Deli meats should be warmed before being eaten.
- Only consume pasteurized dairy products.
- Wash fruits and veggies well.
- Watch excessive mercury intake by avoiding fish with higher levels (swordfish, big eye tuna, marlin, King mackerel)

### Dietary Information

- **Weight gain** should be expected in pregnancy, with most weight gained in the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters. Please ask about your expected total weight gain at your first obstetric visit.
- Consuming a healthy, balanced diet which includes **sources of protein** is recommended.
- Most **prenatal vitamins** will contain the appropriate amounts of the following micronutrients (daily amounts recommended to be met through diet and supplements).
  - Folic Acid: 600mcg daily
  - Calcium: 1000mg daily if less than 31 years, 1300mg daily if more than 31 years
  - Iron 27mg daily
  - Choline 450mg daily
  - DHA 200-300mg daily



## Avoiding Infections

There are some infections that if they occur in pregnancy can cause birth defects. Please review the following infections, sources of exposure and our recommendations for avoiding infection:

- **Toxoplasmosis:** Avoid handling raw meat, cat litter (especially for outdoor cats) and gardening without gloves.
- **HSV/Syphilis:** Practicing safe sex with partners who know their sexually transmitted infection (STI) status.
- **Rubella and Varicella:** If you haven't been vaccinated prior to pregnancy, be aware of local outbreaks and avoid contact with individuals sick with German Measles (rubella) and Chickenpox (varicella).
- **CMV:** Avoid contact with the urine and saliva in those that are sick (young children are common carriers for this viral illness), practice good hand hygiene and avoid sharing utensils, cups.

## Exercise and Pelvic Rest

Exercise is encouraged throughout your pregnancy; moving your body is an important part of your physical and mental health. Follow these recommendations for exercise:

- 150 minutes / week of moderate exercise is encouraged
- Contact sports or those with a high risk of falling are not recommended
- Avoid dehydration and heated workouts
- Exert yourself to the level of still being able to carry on a conversation.
- Check with provider regarding exercise safety if high risk pregnancy.

Pelvic rest is not recommended unless your provider makes this recommendation.

## Vaccinations

Flu, COVID booster, Tdap and RSV vaccines are recommended in pregnancy on the following schedule:

- Flu and COVID: given when next available but irrespective of gestational age.
- Tdap: around 27 weeks of pregnancy
- RSV: 34-37 weeks of pregnancy during the fall/winter months.



## Environmental Safety

- We recommend referencing [MothersToBaby.org](http://MothersToBaby.org) website or talking with your OBGYN provider for questions regarding environmental or work hazards.
- Pregnancy is one of the highest risk times for domestic violence, if you are not safe at home please report this to your care team so that we can connect you with resources to make a safety/exit plan.
- Seatbelt use at all times in cars. Call the office or on-call provider with any falls or motor vehicle accidents.

## Travel

Travel is safe for most people who are pregnant. Air travel is allowed until 36 weeks by most airlines. We recommend traveling with a printout of your prenatal records which we are happy to provide. It is encouraged to wear loose fitting clothes, hydrate and avoid deep vein thrombosis (blood clot) formation with compression stockings, foot pumps, and short walks every ~2-3 hours. Check the CDC website to avoid travel to places where Zika and Chagas disease are endemic. Check with your OBGYN provider regarding travel safety if high risk pregnancy.

## Medications, Supplement and Drug Exposure

For medications such as supplements, herbs, vitamins and those bought over-the-counter in pregnancy, please check our [Safe Meds in Pregnancy](#) website page (or print out within new OB folder given at first OB appointment) or [mothersbaby.org](http://mothersbaby.org) for safety.

There is no safe amount of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or other illicit drugs in pregnancy. Please avoid to ensure the safest pregnancy for you and baby.

## Ultrasounds

We recommend an ultrasound examination for all our patients in mid pregnancy to assess fetal growth and development. Ultrasounds in pregnancy use special settings to ensure safety for your growing pregnancy.

For routine low risk pregnancies, an ultrasound will typically be performed once at ~ 20 weeks into pregnancy to evaluate the anatomy of the fetus, placenta, umbilical cord.

For higher-risk pregnancies, more frequent ultrasounds will be ordered. Ultrasounds may be performed at InterMed OBGYN office or at the Maternal Fetal Medicine office (MFM) on Congress Street, so please check the location of your appointment before arrival.



## Labwork

**Routine prenatal labs** will be performed at your first OB visit. These include:

- Complete Blood Count (CBC)
- Blood type and screen
- Urine culture and protein
- HIV
- Syphilis
- Hep B and C
- Rubella Immunity

**Genetic Screening Options:** Your provider will discuss options for carrier, aneuploidy and open neural tube defect screening. Please reference the Prenatal Screening Test Options handout that came with your intake paperwork, the videos listed at the end are a great resource to look at in preparation for your first OB visit.

## About our Practice

InterMed OBGYN's doctors and midwives work in a care team of 11 physicians, 5 nurse practitioners, and 2 certified nurse midwives. It is possible you could see any of these providers during your pregnancy or your labor and delivery stay.

Our providers only deliver at Maine Medical Center and this is a teaching hospital, therefore there will be residents and/or medical students involved in your care.

## Routine Communication with InterMed OBGYN

For non-urgent issues, you can message us via the portal but be aware that you may not get a response for 2-3 days.



## **Urgent Communication with InterMed OBGYN**

If you are pregnant and are experiencing any of these following symptoms, please call the office at 207-874-2445 to speak with a clinical staff member Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

If it is any time outside normal office hours (nights, weekends or holidays) please call our office, and you will be directed to the answering service/on-call provider. If the on-call provider does not return your call within 30 minutes, please call the office again.

Do not send a portal message if you have any of these concerns regarding your pregnancy. Please call the office for direct communication with a clinical member and/or physician.

- Vaginal bleeding
- Decreased fetal movements.
- Elevated blood pressures (140's/90's)
- Headaches that do not resolve with Tylenol, hydration and/or caffeine.
- Vision changes
- Right upper quadrant abdominal pain
- New, increased swelling in extremities
- Loss of vaginal fluid (water breaking)
- Signs of labor
- Shortness of breath and/or chest pain
- Or any additional concerns