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Pregnancy Do's and Don'ts

PREGNANCY DOS AND DON'TS

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If you just found out that you're pregnant, should you eat fish? What about drinking a cup of coffee, soft drink or glass of wine? Can you travel by air? Should you get your hair dyed? Can you stand in front of a microwave? Arrggghhhh! You probably have a thousand questions, but only a hundred answers about what you should and shouldn't do or eat while pregnant. So here are a few tips to help you and your baby stay healthy for the

next nine months.

Do see your doctor for regular prenatal checkups. Ask about stopping any medications you are currently taking and starting any new ones. Make sure health problems such as diabetes or high blood pressure are treated and kept under control. Ask about getting a flu shot. Don't forget to wear a seatbelt when you are in the car.

Do eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains, calcium-rich foods and lean meats. It's okay to have up to 12 ounces of fish per week, but avoid fish such as shark, swordfish, mackerel or

tilefish, that are high in mercury and can cause serious nervous system damage for your baby. Instead, opt for canned light tuna, shrimp, salmon, pollack or catfish. Also stay away from unpasteurized milk and soft cheeses because they may contain listeria, a bacterium linked to miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth or fetal illness. Remember to drink plenty of water every day to prevent constipation.

Do get at least 400 mcg of folic acid every day to lower the risk of birth defects. It's also a good idea to take folic acid before you become pregnant. Also be sure to get enough



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iron to prevent anemia and reduce the chances of preterm birth and a low-birth weight baby. Your doctor may prescribe prenatal vitamins during your pregnancy.

Do get seven to nine hours of sleep each night and reduce stress in your life by setting limits and saying "no" to requests for your time and energy.

Don't smoke, which can raise the risk of miscarriage, preterm birth and infant death, drink alcohol, which can cause irreversible birth defects, or use illegal drugs, which are dangerous for you and your baby. Avoid exposure to

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Tips to help you and your unborn child stay healthy during pregnancy

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toxic substances and chemicals, such as cleaning solvents, certain insecticides and paint.

Don't gain too much weight. Excess body weight can increase the chances of developing gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia, stillbirth and preterm birth. In general, a woman who

is normal weight should gain about 25 pounds during her pregnancy.

Don't change or clean out your cat's litter box and avoid contact with pet rodents such as guinea pigs and hamsters.

Don't take very hot baths or use a hot tub or sauna, which can be harmful to the fetus. Also avoid douching or using scented feminine hygiene

products, which can increase the risk of infection.

You can get your hair dyed, drink a cup of coffee or soda, stand in front of a microwave, sit in front of a computer monitor, paint your nails, and travel by air when you are pregnant. If you have any more questions about pregnancy dos and don'ts, talk with your doctor or call 1-800-984-3434 for a

free referral to an obstetrician/gynecologist near you.

North Shore Medical Center offers advanced medical care by skilled professionals, who have the experience to handle routine deliveries and fully address any complications that may occur. NSMC has been delivering babies for a half century, and the services have earned the highest quality ranking.

The facilities at North Shore Medical Center are designed for the comfort of you and your family. Each member of our staff is trained to enhance the experience of giving birth. From prenatal educational classes to our Neonatal Intensive Care, from our obstetricians to nursing staff, all North Shore's services are focused on you and your baby. North Shore Medical

Center also features the only Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in Northern Miami-Dade County. Services include 24-hour coverage of certified neonatologists, perinatologists to treat high risk pregnancies, and pediatric surgeons.

For more information on maternity services or classes at North Shore Medical Center, please call 305-835-6000.