



Women's Health Care Inc

## “The Take-Home Message”

### **The First Prenatal Visit**

Congratulations on your pregnancy! Our goal is to help you have a pleasant pregnancy and delivery experience as well as the healthiest baby possible. Our initial advice to you would include:

- ✚ ***Avoid alcoholic beverages completely.***
  - High, chronic alcohol intake is known to cause serious birth defects including retardation-we simply don't know what a safe amount is.
  
- ✚ ***If you smoke, QUIT; if not, avoid breathing cigarette smoke.***
  - Toxic gasses from cigarette smoke do get into the baby's bloodstream.
  - Cigarettes increase the risk of miscarriage, small babies, premature labor and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
  - If someone is smoking near you, ask them to leave or you leave the area.
  
- ✚ ***Watch your diet and weight gain.***
  - 25-35 lbs. is the normal weight gain during pregnancy for most patients.
  - Only 300 extra calories per day, starting at 20 weeks is required for most patients.
  - Avoid the empty calories of sweets, fast foods and high calorie beverages.
  - Low-fat dairy products (skim or 1/2% milk) are best.
  - One or two servings daily of caffeine and NutraSweet® is OK.
  
- ✚ ***Eat a “healthy” well-rounded diet with lots of water, fruits, vegetables and lean meats.***
  - Limit your consumption of fresh-water fish caught by family and friends to *one meal per week*.

- You can safely eat an average of 12 ounces per week (cooked weight) of other types of fish.
- Avoid
  - shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish.
  - refrigerated smoked seafood except in a cooked dish—canned fish may be eaten.
  - hot dogs, luncheon meats or deli meats unless they are reheated until steaming hot.
  - soft cheeses, e.g., feta, Brie, Camembert, and blue-veined cheeses.
  - refrigerated pate or meat spreads,

 ***Moderate, low-impact exercise is good – don't overdo it! Consider 30 minutes of walking 5 days per week.***

 ***Spotting and light cramping is not unusual early in pregnancy.***

- Heavy bleeding or severe pain should prompt a call to our office.

 ***One in six pregnancies end in miscarriage.***

- In most cases nothing can be done to prevent this.
- After the heartbeat is heard, the risk of miscarriage decreases considerably. You may not want to tell everyone of your pregnancy until we have heard the heartbeat.

 ***Around 3% of babies have major birth defects.***

- Some we can find during pregnancy and some we cannot.

 ***We typically do an ultrasound in the first trimester and also around 20 weeks of pregnancy.***

- We will advise you of other testing that is available.

 ***There is a standard panel of bloodwork that all prenatal patients must have.***

- Optional tests include Cystic Fibrosis screening, Maternal Serum Screen 4 and the “Early Screen” - you will need to discuss these with your doctor and decide if you want these tests.
- Certain patients will be offered genetic testing, i.e., chorionic villus sampling or amniocentesis—please discuss these options with the doctor.