

## OBSTETRICAL VISIT 29 TO 34 WEEKS

### HOW IS MY BABY DEVELOPING?

- 30 weeks – the baby is 27 cm long and weighs about 1300 grams (2 pounds 14 ounces). The feet measure 5.9 centimeters. The eyes are open and baby has a good head of hair. The skin is still slightly wrinkled.
- 32 weeks – the baby is about 28 centimeters long and weighs about 1750 grams (3 pounds 14 ounces) the toenails are present and the body is filling out with fat but is still red and wrinkled. The testes begin descending.
- 34 weeks – the baby is about 30 centimeters and weighs about 2100 grams (4 pounds 10 ounces), skin is pink and smooth and fingernails reach the fingertips.

### SHOULD I BREASTFEED?

- The decision to breastfeed is a personal decision but you should know all of the advantages of breastfeeding
- Breastfeeding helps the baby's gastrointestinal tract to grow good bacteria and reduces the risk of bad bacteria. Breastfed babies have less risk of necrotizing enterocolitis, a dangerous bowel infection and colic.
- Breast milk has antimicrobial activity and decreases the risk of diarrhea, lower respiratory tract illness, sepsis, and ear infections.
- Breastfeeding decreases the risk of cancers such as lymphoma and leukemia. Breastfeeding decreases the risk of bad cholesterol and cardiovascular disease. Breastfed babies have lower risk of Type I diabetes. There may be some decreased risk of obesity and allergies.
- Some studies of adults show that longer duration of breastfeeding is associated with better IQ. This study showed that the average IQ for an adult who was breastfed less than 1 month was 99.4 while the average IQ of a baby breastfed for 7 to 9 months was 106.

### YOU CAN START KICK COUNTS AT THIS TIME!

- You can now begin to monitor the babies movements using kick counts
- After a meal you can lay on your side and feel the baby moving
- It is normal to feel 10 movements within 2 hours
- If you do not feel enough movement you should be seen in the hospital or office immediately.

### SIGNS OF PRETERM LABOR?

- Vaginal Bleeding
  - Some light spotting after a cervical exam or intercourse may be normal
  - All other vaginal bleeding should be evaluated as this can be a sign of preterm labor
- Contractions
  - Regular contractions at this time are not normal and should be evaluated by going to the hospital or office immediately.
- Water breaking
  - Water breaking is not normal and is a risk for infection around the baby
  - If you are suspicious that your water is broken you should call the office or go to the hospital immediately if the office is closed.

### WHEN SHOULD I REGISTER AT THE HOSPITAL?

- You can go to labor and delivery and give them your information at this time so that when you come in labor they will have all your information already entered into the system.

## SHOULD I ATTEND CHILDBIRTH CLASSES?

- Yes, childbirth classes are very useful and are offered at the hospital. Please call 800-879-1033 and schedule yourself for this free class.

## WHAT KIND OF BIRTH CONTROL SHOULD I USE?

- If you would like to get your tubes tied we need to sign papers at least one month prior to your due date. It is important to remember that a tubal is permanent and irreversible.
- Other options that are easy, reversible, long term, and equally effective to tying the tubes include:
  - Mirena IUD – the T shaped device is placed easily in the uterus and lasts for 5 years
  - Implanon – is placed in your arm and acts like a 3 year depo provera shot

## COMMON PROBLEMS

- Round ligament pain
  - These are usually sharp pains that occur on both sides of the lower abdomen.
  - They can be relieved by taking Tylenol extra strength 2 pills (1000 mg) every 6 hours by mouth as needed.
  - As the baby grows your uterus is supported by ligaments at the top of the uterus that stretch down across the lower part of your abdomen and down into the labia. Stretching on this ligament causes round ligament pain.
- Leg Cramps
  - Are painful muscle contractions in the calves usually occurring at night
  - Stretching exercises may be an effective preventive measure. These can be performed as follows: Stand facing the wall, feet together, about 24 inches from the wall. With the heels firmly on the floor and the body aligned straight lean forward to the wall, stretching the calves. Hold this position for 20 seconds. Repeat five times twice per day.
  - Also, try a hot bath or shower, more hydration, and exercise to condition the leg
  - If this does not work supplementation with Magnesium may help
- Heartburn
  - Tends to worsen with pregnancy as the baby gets larger and pushes up on the stomach
  - You can use TUMS and Maalox along with lifestyle changes below to help. If TUMS and Maalox do not control your symptoms then a prescription acid reduction medicine is needed.
  - Lifestyle changes include:
    - Raise the head of your bed by 6 to 8 inches by putting the bed on wood blocks or putting a Styrofoam wedge under the mattress
    - Stop smoking, if you smoke
    - Eat many small meals instead of 2-3 large meals per day
    - Avoid lying down for a full 3 hours after each meal
    - Avoid foods that are associated with more stomach acid. These include coffee, peppermint, chocolate, and spicy or greasy foods.