 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN PREGNANCY

**Caffeine**

* Try to avoid caffeine products in pregnancy
* We advise no more than one cup of regular coffee, tea, or soda per day and a maximum of <200 mg of caffeine/day
  + Average cup of coffee has 80-100 mg of caffeine
* You may have decaf if you wish, soda should be kept to a minimum
* It is natural for thirst to increase during pregnancy and water is the best beverage choice

**Dental Care**

* Routine dental care is recommended and plays an important role in helping to decrease the risk of preterm labor
* Avoid x-rays and consult with your provider if medication is required

**Alcohol**

* Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can be harmful to yourself and your baby
* Avoid alcohol at all times during your pregnancy
* Keep in mind fermented drinks (i.e. Kombucha, Kevita, etc) may contain small amounts of alcohol

**Marijuana**

* Marijuana use in pregnancy can be harmful to yourself and your baby
* Avoid marijuana use at all times during your pregnancy and while breastfeeding

**Hair Dyes & Permanents**

* Although likely no problem with dyes and permanent solutions, your hair’s response may not be predictable
* A single permanent or highlighting procedure will most-likely not be harmful

**Travel**

* Travel is safe whenever desired until 32-34 weeks of pregnancy
  + After this time, it is suggested you remain closer to home
  + If you plan of traveling after this time, check in with your healthcare provider prior (especially if there is a personal or family history of fast labors)
* Airlines typically do not allow travel after 36 weeks of pregnancy

**Painting**

* If you need to be involved with painting, be sure there is good ventilation and wear gloves
* Avoid oil-based paints, turpentine and other liquid paint-stripping agents
* Latex paint may be used in well-ventilated areas

**Intercourse**

* Unless you have been given specific instructions to the contrary due to pregnancy related complications, you may continue to have sexual relations throughout the pregnancy, as long as it is comfortable to do so
* If you have any bleeding or if your water has broken, you must **not** have intercourse

**Gardening**

* Wear gloves while gardening to prevent coming in contact with soil that has been contaminated with cat feces as there is a concern of contracting toxoplasmosis
* Always wash hands after coming in contact with soil

**Kitty Litter**

* If you own a cat, you should not handle cat litter, have someone else change the box
* If you absolutely have to, be sure to wear gloves and a mask

**Pregnancy Environmental Hotline**

* 1(800)-322-5014 or (781)-466-8474, you may call this number to obtain information about drugs, chemicals, and exposures during pregnancy

**Illnesses of Concern**

* Rubella (German Measles): Most people are immune to Rubella, through immunization or by having had the illness. Your immune status to this disease will be checked as part of your routine prenatal screen blood tests. If you are immune, there is no concern. If you are not immune, then you should avoid exposure to anyone who has German measles, as it can be very harmful to the baby, especially in the first trimester. It is recommended that you receive an immunization postpartum to give you immunity to Rubella for future pregnancies.
* Varicella (Chicken Pox): If you have had Chicken Pox in the past, then you are immune to Varicella and there is no concern. If you come down with Chicken Pox during the pregnancy, please let us know. There is low incidence of fetal harm and it may be related to where you are in the pregnancy. If you do not know if you have had the Chicken Pox, try to avoid contact with anyone who has the illness.
* Toxoplasmosis *[routine screening is not recommended]*: This is a flu-like illness that is mild in adults but may be harmful to your baby. It is mainly transmitted through cat feces and undercooked meat. The best way to protect yourself against the illness is to avoid exposure by only eating thoroughly cooked meat and not changing the litter box. Always wash your hands after touching cats, undercooked meat and soil. If you garden, wearing gloves will help prevent contact with the soil that may be contaminated with cat feces. If you have a cat, your prenatal lab work will include a test for exposure to this illness.
* Fifth’s Disease *[routine screening is not recommended]:* This is a contagious childhood illness manifested by flu-like symptoms and a rash. The rash appears after the flu symptoms have resolved for the most part. It appears as a lacy (slapped cheek) type rash. Although the risks of fetal harm are low, if you get the illness, the risk for harm exists and you should try to avoid contact with anyone who may have the disease. About 50% of adults have already been exposed and are immune to the disease. If you think you have been exposed during the pregnancy, please notify us and we will order a blood test that will check for recent infection.