

BABY TALK – PART I

So you just found out you're pregnant. Congratulations! That is wonderful! What is even more amazing is that your baby already has a spine, most of the body organs, arms and legs beginning to form, and its own nervous system. And it's only 5 weeks old! Miraculous! In order for your baby to develop normally, it has two basic needs: One is proper nutrition and the other is a normally operating nervous system.

Let's cover nutrition first.

At the risk of insulting my readers, some people operate under the impression that as long as they are not hungry, they eat well. Not true! As a mom, you must be aware of the fact that everything you eat and drink affects your baby. Everything! Generally the baby will take from the mother whatever it needs in terms of nutrition and I have met many mothers in my practice who are literally undernourished as a result. As a mom, you must remember that you are eating for two. Simply "filling up" is not the answer. Your baby has very specific needs as it is growing and developing. Its rate of growth is seven times faster than its three-year-old brother. Much like feeding a baby elephant some may say!

The baby will take as much as it can from mom so it is important that mother provides proper fuel for all that rapid growth. So the following are essential for normal development of your baby:

1. **Iron.** Mom requires at least 800 mg daily. This is crucial for the development of red blood cells in your baby and is contained in most dark leafy veggies. If you must, you can obtain a liquid iron supplement from a health food store. The nicest way of getting iron is from a tablespoon of dark molasses in a glass of milk three times a day. What a way to treat your baby! Taking Vitamin C will help in the absorption of Iron from your digestive tract.
2. **Folic Acid.** This is very important in the normal development of the nervous system and cannot be omitted. You are lucky though, Folic Acid is contained in most foods which contain iron so it's a cinch to get. If you really want to get fancy, Oysters are loaded with Folic Acid. They are also a known aphrodisiac and that may be why you are reading this, but that is another topic!
3. **Calcium.** Our friend! Mom and baby need at least 1200 mg daily. Broccoli is the best source of calcium or you may try raw almonds if you are not into broccoli. Vitamin D helps in the absorption of Calcium from the digestive tract. This can be tricky because Vitamin D can also cause nausea and "morning sickness". I found that the easiest way of getting Vitamin D is from a careful suntan; whether it be outside or in a reputable tanning salon. If you do decide to use the "electric beach", be careful of heat. Babies do not like getting too hot!

I would also like to caution moms on taking Vitamin B6 when pregnant. It tends to reduce the amount of breast milk available for feeding; not a good thing! I'll continue in two weeks. See you then!

If you would like additional information on this very important subject, please call our office.



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BABY TALK - PART II

I would like to address some of the taboos and misunderstandings often associated with moms being pregnant. One of the biggest is this whole issue of weight gain. Moms all over the world secretly look in the mirror and cringe at the sight of the loss of their waist, their "fat" stomach, enlarged breasts, swollen feet, and the fact that they often carry drips of their lunch on their tee-shirt. Let me be emphatic here: You are not FAT, you are PREGNANT!! Huge difference! Swelling is actually a sign of a healthy pregnancy, not something that should be treated. Retention of fluids is healthy for mom and baby. It is also temporary. Just part of being pregnant!

A generation ago, weight gain was limited to 8-10 lbs. It was soon discovered that moms and babies were undernourished so the magic number became 24. This is no longer the case. Latest research indicates that weight gain of 35 lbs or more on a high protein diet is healthy as long as it is well balanced, does not contain chemicals or preservatives and is limited in refined sugars.

The other issue revolves around salt. Moms are often told to restrict their salt intake. You should realize that Sodium (a part of salt) is very important in the production of extra blood volume. Very important for a growing baby and a lack can be disastrous. I recommend that you use salt "to taste" and no more. This is an easy way to listen to what your body is telling you.

There are other no-no's that you should be aware of when you're pregnant. One is Alcohol. It causes problems with the development of your baby's nervous system. Caffeine is another. It has been linked to birth defects. This can be found in coffee, cola, black and green teas and chocolate (Boo). As well, try to limit your preservative intake including aspartame (refer to my earlier issue of Kids-First); your baby will thank you later. Be very cautious using any type of drugs or medications. All have adverse effects on your baby. I should be emphatic here - all drugs cross the placental barrier and affect your baby. There is no such thing as a "safe drug."

One of the most common nuisances of pregnancy is the "morning sickness" thing. Most of this is caused by a lack of blood sugar - hypoglycaemia. After-all, you have not eaten since 7-8:00 pm the night before and your developing baby is literally feeding all night while you are asleep. Your blood sugar level is dangerously low and you feel sick. I ask my patients to have an energy bar or a snack high in protein, fructose and complex carbs late in the evening, which will level out their blood sugar until breakfast.

There are a number of things you can do to make your pregnancy the enjoyable experience it was meant to be. The first is having a chiropractic check-up to make sure your nervous system is functioning normally so that you have a good pregnancy and much easier labor and delivery. This has little to do with back pain but is crucial for optimal health. I feel this is a must in having a healthy pregnancy.

The use of herbs such as red raspberry leaves makes for a good uterine tonic and helps prevent miscarriage, anaemia and aids in fighting infection. Peppermint tea will help with digestion and nausea. So will ginger root. Other herbs such as Echinacea and camomile are very relaxing and should be taken as a hot tea. All these are available from your health food store.



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B A B Y T A L K



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PART III

A pediatric chiropractor will also perform regular checks throughout your pregnancy. This consists of an external examination that includes palpation (feeling) of the uterus and pelvis. This examination will help determine the presence of ***In-Utero Constraint***.

This is very important! ***In-Utero constraint*** occurs usually in the last trimester of pregnancy when “you are all baby”. In other words, the baby has reached a size where movement is very restricted and it can get “stuck” in an awkward position in the uterus. This can also happen if mom’s pelvis is not moving properly.

The situation can not only create stress on the spine and nervous system but can lead to the creation of scoliosis (spinal curvatures), as well as other spinal abnormalities. All in all, a situation best avoided. Along with preventing ***In-Utero constraint***, chiropractic has also been very effective in the turning of breech presentations.

So, I invite you to have yourself checked. Chiropractic is very safe and effective. It is also ***the world’s best kept secret***.

Please call me today.



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