



COLORADO ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

2224 S. Fraser St., Unit 1, Aurora, CO 80014
Phone: 303-696-6655 Toll-Free: 800-468-8615 Fax: 303-696-7224

Myths & Facts: PREGNANCY

Expectant women want to know what they need to do in order to have a healthy pregnancy. One of the best ways to have a healthy pregnancy is to be healthy before becoming pregnant. Maintaining a healthy weight through diet and regular exercise, staying current on immunizations and not smoking or consuming alcohol all provide a positive start for both mom and baby. There are numerous myths surrounding pregnancy that are commonly heard by Family Medicine physicians and here are the quick facts.

MYTH: A pregnant woman can eat as much as desired since she is eating for two.

FACT: A pregnant woman is not eating for two; she's actually eating for one plus a little more. Eating for two implies the mother needs to double her calories, which is not true. Still, it's very important that the mother make healthy choices to ensure foods consumed are not just empty calories. A gain of 25 to 30 pounds during pregnancy is generally recommended for a woman of normal weight. Making healthy food choices is beneficial for the baby and results in less added pounds for the mother to lose in order to return to a healthy weight following birth.

MYTH: Drinking caffeine while pregnant is harmful to the baby.

FACT: At this time there is no evidence that moderate caffeine intake (one –two cups of coffee per day) while pregnant is harmful to the baby. Water is a better choice, pregnant or not, and tea without caffeine is another alternative.

MYTH: Sleeping on the back while pregnant can cut off blood supply to the baby, causing harm.

FACT: This is not true. Sleeping positions do not cause harm to the unborn child. It is safe for a pregnant woman to sleep in any position that is comfortable.

MYTH: It's not safe to have sex while pregnant.

FACT: In most instances, having sex during the course of a healthy pregnancy is safe. However, there are some pregnancy complications, such as low-lying placenta (placenta previa) for example, when a woman would be counseled to avoid sex. Always check with your family doctor, as there is no question anyone should feel afraid to ask.

Reviewed by: Kajsa Harris, MD

This information is provided as a public service by the Colorado Academy of Family Physicians. For more information about the body during pregnancy, fetal health, childbirth and caring for newborns, visit the American Academy of Family Physicians website at www.familydoctor.org