



KK Women's and
Children's Hospital
SingHealth

Dos and Don'ts in Pregnancy



PATIENTS. AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO.®

Stop smoking

Smoking affects your baby's health and increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, small baby and preterm delivery.

If assistance is required, you may be referred to the Smoking Cessation Service.



Stop drinking alcohol

Alcohol affects growth and development of your baby and leads to lifelong effects in your child, such as learning difficulties, low IQ, hyperactivity and poor attention span.

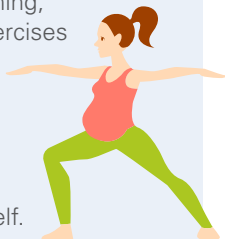
There is no known safe amount of alcohol.

Exercise regularly

Regular exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight gain and positive mental health during your pregnancy. Swimming, walking, running, yoga and pilates are some of the exercises you can do during your pregnancy.

AVOID:

Vigorous activities such as contact sports or racquet games which may carry risk of falling or injury to yourself.



Diet and food

It is recommended to eat a healthy and balanced diet to ensure that you receive adequate nutrition that you and your baby need.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO EAT FOR TWO!

In fact, you only need an additional 300kcal/day during your pregnancy.

AVOID:

- Raw/undercooked meat, seafood, eggs
- Unpasteurised milk, soft cheeses, pates
- Uncooked ham, hotdogs, luncheon meats

These food may contain *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacteria that can cause miscarriages and stillbirths.

Caffeine

High levels of caffeine can result in babies having a low birth weight, which increases the risk of health problems later in life.

Besides coffee, caffeine is also found in some other food and drinks, such as tea, chocolate, cola and some energy drinks.

LIMIT to less than 200mg of caffeine per day.

One mug of instant coffee = 60-80mg

One mug of filtered coffee = 140mg

One cup of tea = 30-50mg



Pregnancy weight

Pregnancy is not a time to lose weight, even if you are over-sized. Focus on eating a healthy diet.

If you have a normal BMI (18.5 to 24.9), you should aim to gain 10 to 15kg during your pregnancy.

However, if your BMI is above 30, you should aim to only gain 5 to 9kg during your pregnancy.

Travel

Generally, commercial air travel before 36 weeks of pregnancy (or 32 weeks if you are carrying twins) is considered safe. Flying for long hours (>4 hours) increases your risk of getting blood clots in your legs and lungs.

Take precautions when you travel by air:

- Take regular walks along the aisle
- If you must remain seated, flex and extend your ankles periodically
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Wear graduated compression stockings

Check the airline's policy. Air travel guidelines for pregnant women may vary by carrier and destination. If you are travelling in a car, always wear a three point seat belt, above and below your bump (not over it).

Sauna/Jacuzzi/Hot tub

Excessive exposure to heat increases your body's core temperature, which can cause deformities of the spine and brain of the developing fetus.

Mental health

Depression can affect the brain development of your baby and increases the risk of having a small baby.

If you are having symptoms of depression or anxiety for most days up to two weeks, please inform your doctor.

Symptoms of depression include:

- Low mood
- Irritability
- Tearfulness
- Poor sleep
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Poor appetite
- Poor concentration or forgetfulness
- Loss of energy
- Excessive self-blame or guilt
- Feeling hopeless or that life is meaningless



Self-grooming

Some studies have shown that very high doses of the chemicals used in hair dyes may cause harm. However, the dose used for colouring your hair is very low.

- Hair colouring, straightening and bleaching are generally safe in pregnancy
- Painting of nails in pregnancy is generally safe



AVOID:

Gel manicures

Cat litter and toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis (a parasite infection) can cause premature delivery and serious malformation of the baby. Transmission of toxoplasmosis is usually from contact with cat's faeces.

- Wash your hands after changing your cat's litter box, digging or gardening outside
- Wash your fruits and vegetables before consuming

Vaccination in pregnancy

Vaccines that contain killed (inactivated) viruses, bacteria and other pathogens can be given during pregnancy.

Recommended vaccines:

1) Influenza vaccine

Pregnant women are at increased risk of developing severe illness if they get these seasonal flu. This vaccine can be given safely at any stage of your pregnancy.

2) Whooping cough vaccine

This provides immunity against whooping cough (Pertussis) infection to your baby during the first few weeks after they are born. The best time to get this vaccine is between 16 and 32 weeks into your pregnancy.

3) Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine

RSV is the most common cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children younger than one year of age, and is responsible for almost half the paediatric admissions for viral respiratory tract infection in Singapore. Pregnant women can get an RSV vaccine between 32 and 36 weeks of their pregnancy to reduce the risk of their baby getting an RSV infection in the first few months of life.

Intimacy during pregnancy

Sex will not harm the baby at any stage during an uncomplicated pregnancy. As long as you are comfortable, most sexual positions are safe during pregnancy.

AVOID sex if:

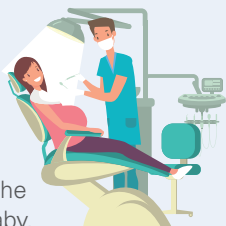
- You have vaginal bleeding
- Your water bag is leaking
- Your placenta is low lying
- Either partner has any sexually transmitted infection

Dental procedures

Good dental hygiene is important and going to the dentist for routine care is safe during pregnancy.

RESCHEDULE major dental procedures such as bleaching until after delivery.

AVOID amalgam fillings due to the risk of mercury toxicity to the baby.



It is normal to experience a slight decline in overall fitness level as your pregnancy progresses. This is because the physical demands of pregnancy has increased. Pay attention to your body. Be aware of the warning signs and see your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Fluid leaking from the vagina
- Painful womb contractions
- Chest pain
- Dizziness or feeling faint
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Calf pain or swelling
- Excessive fatigue

Useful telephone number

Central Appointments

6294-4050



**KK Women's and
Children's Hospital**
SingHealth

100 Bukit Timah Road
Singapore 229899
Tel: 6-CALL KKH (6-2255 554)
Fax: 6293-7933

Website: www.kkh.com.sg

 www.facebook.com/kkh.sg