

Wellness UPDATE

Pregnancy Education Week: 13-21 February

The nine months leading up to childbirth can be one of the most exciting and fulfilling times in a woman's life. However, choosing to have a baby is also one of the biggest decisions you will ever make. It is therefore vital that you become informed about the many facets of pregnancy.

There are a number of issues that mothers-to-be need to consider when preparing for a healthy pregnancy and birth. Below are seven points for a healthy pregnancy to help you along your way:
Seven points for a healthy pregnancy:



1. Getting tested

There are a number of tests that should be taken early on in your pregnancy, including an HIV test. There are other pre-existing medical conditions that can affect your pregnancy i.e. diabetes. Other illnesses can also be a threat to pregnant women, such as German measles, toxoplasmosis and syphilis. Contraction of these can be highly dangerous for mother and baby.

2. Antenatal classes

Attending classes before your baby is born will give you an idea of what to expect leading up to the birth. This helps you to better manage your pregnancy and birth experience so that you can enjoy the special time to the fullest.

3. Nutrition

It is essential for your health and that of the baby that you receive the correct nutrients during pregnancy. A healthy eating plan should include plenty of fruit, vegetables, protein, whole-grains and lots of water. You will require supplements over and above this as well, such as folic acid, preferably from before conception and then throughout the pregnancy as it helps to prevent spinal defects in the baby. A healthy diet during pregnancy does not only mean eating the right foods. It is also necessary to avoid certain foods, such as raw fish, rare and cured meat, soft cheese and raw or soft egg yolk. This is to protect you and your baby from any harmful parasites or bacteria.

(Taken from www.gems.gov.za)

4. Exercise

One of the ways to help you stay healthy and in shape when pregnant is to engage in some form of exercise. Physical activity helps you to stay fit and toned during pregnancy. It can also produce endorphins, which make you feel happy. You should only do exercises that your body can handle during this period. Mild activities such as walking, water aerobics and gentle forms of yoga are often most enjoyable for pregnant women.

5. Avoiding unhealthy substances

This is a time when your child's life depends on you and the decisions you make. Cigarettes, alcohol and drugs can be extremely damaging to the baby's health and can result in premature and underweight babies. Using such substances has also been proven to result in learning disabilities in children.

6. The role of your partner and family

Pregnancy is a wonderful experience but it can also be very overwhelming. It is therefore helpful to have someone who you can rely on for emotional support.

7. Being positive and enjoying the pregnancy

This is one of the most wonderful times of your life and you have every reason to be happy about bringing your little bundle of joy into the world. Try not to worry too much as most of the time it is not worth your while and can prevent you from fully enjoying the experience.

Wellness UPDATE

Teen Suicide Prevention Week: 15-22 February

Feelings of failure

TEEN SUICIDE PREVENTION

Teen suicide is becoming more common every year in South Africa. In fact only car accidents and homicide kill more youth between the ages of 15 and 24. In South Africa 9% of all teen deaths are caused by suicide. The fastest growing age is young people under 35, specifically female suicides which peak between 15 to 19 years!

Research indicates that although more females attempt suicide, more males succeed. This is due to the more violent nature males select. Girls are more likely to overdose on medication, or take chemicals, whereas boys often find access to firearms or hang themselves.

There is a major link between Depression and Suicide. Most of the time teen depression is a passing mood. Sadness, loneliness, grief and disappointments we all feel at times, and are normal reactions to life's struggles. However undiagnosed depression can lead to tragedy. Up to one third of all suicide victims had attempted suicide previously.

Said Zane Wilson, Founder of SADAG "It is not hard to see why serious depression and suicide are connected. Depression involves a long lasting sad mood that doesn't let up and a loss of pleasure in things you once enjoyed. It involves thoughts about death, negative thoughts about oneself, a sense of worthlessness".

We get calls ranging from a teen girl of 15 who has been constantly abused by her stepfather, a boy who has lost his elder brother due to gang violence and a child of 12 whose mother has recently died of AIDS, sometimes they feel there is nothing to look forward to or that life would be less painful if they were to end it." However, Depression is treatable! With treatment over 70% can make a recovery.

Research done by SADAG indicates that teens had strong feelings about the talks:

- "I had problems and thought the solution was suicide the talk taught us about the crisis line",
- "We learnt things we didn't know about being sad",
- "It helped me a lot and I want to help others who suffer from depression"
- "The talk was helpful because I sometimes become stressed and didn't know who to turn to"

The same research indicated that there was a slightly elevated suicide ideation in urban teens living in Gauteng. These feelings are consistent with the youth Suicide Risk Survey where results indicated higher levels of sadness and feeling of hopelessness experienced by adolescents in Gauteng.

Key signs of depression:

- Loss of interest in things you like to do
- Sadness that won't go away
- Irritability or feeling angry a lot

Other signs include:

- Feeling guilty or hopeless
- Not enjoying things you once liked
- Feeling tense or worrying a lot
- Crying a lot
- Spending a lot of time alone
- Eating too much or too little
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Having low energy or restless feelings
- Feeling tired a lot
- Missing school a lot
- Hard time making decisions
- Having trouble thinking or paying attention
- Thinking of dying or killing yourself



To find a Support Group in your area, please phone SADAG on (011) 234 4837. Suicide Crisis Line 0800 567 567 or SMS 31393.

(Taken from www.sadag.org)

Wellness UPDATE

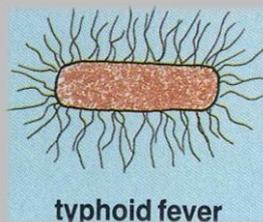
Typhoid Fever

What is Typhoid Fever?

It is an illness caused by a bacterium called *Salmonella typhi* and is contracted by drinking water or eating food contaminated by *Salmonella*.

What are the symptoms?

- Continuous fever
- Headache
- Nausea and or anorexia
- Constipation or diarrhoea
- Hoarse cough



How is typhoid fever spread?

- It is transmitted by contaminated food and water
 - Foods and drinks from street vendors
 - Tap water
 - Food not cooked thoroughly
 - Raw vegetables and fruits that cannot be peeled
- Travelling internationally

Important safety tips:

Always wash your hands

- After you use the toilet
- Before you prepare or serve food
- Before you eat or feed your children

What is the best way of washing your hands?

- Always use soap
- Use plenty of clean water
- Wash all parts of your hands front, back, between the fingers and nails



WASH YOUR HANDS
WASH YOUR FOOD
DRINK CLEAN WATER



(Taken from Dept. of Health KZN & Calibre Clinical Consultants)

Zika Virus

What is the Zika Virus?

The Zika virus is spread to people through an infected mosquito from the *Aedes* genus, mainly in tropical regions. This is the same mosquito that transmits dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms of the Zika virus disease last for 2-7 days:

- fever
- rash
- joint pain
- conjunctivitis (red eyes).



Pregnant women who contract the virus are at risk of microcephaly – which causes babies to be born with an abnormally small head and brain – and neurological development problems in their newborns

Key facts

- There is no specific treatment or vaccine currently available.
- The best form of prevention is protection against mosquito bites.
- The virus is known to circulate in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

Prevention

This can be done by using:

- insect repellent; wearing clothes that cover as much of the body as possible;
- using physical barriers such as screens, closed doors and windows; and sleeping under mosquito nets.
- It is also important to empty, clean or cover containers that can hold water where mosquitoes can breed.

(Taken from www.health24.co.za)

Wellness UPDATE

For more information on the above topics, please contact
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February – Health Calendar

| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|--|---------------------------|-----|--------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 World Cancer Day | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 8-14 Nat Epilepsy Week, Intern. Epilepsy Day | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 31-21 Pregnancy Educational Week | 14 |
| 15 15-22 Teen Suicide Prevention Week | 16 16/2-11/3 HPV Campaign | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | | | | SunSmart: Skin Cancer Awareness STI / Condom Month Paediatric Surge Season | | |