



## Total Women's Health of Baltimore Important Information About Your Pregnancy



### Important Information About the First Trimester

Congratulations! You may have recently heard the words from Dr. Oliver, "Congratulations, you are pregnant!" Or perhaps you have seen positive results from your pregnancy test this morning. You are now ready to embark on your first trimester of pregnancy no matter how the results came to light. Since you will be seeing a host of changes in your body over the next few months you will probably have many questions and even more concerns.

What Can You Expect During First Trimester Pregnancy? The advantage is the fact that there are many resources available to help educate yourself about what is coming. Because of the risks of complications and the uncomfortable symptoms you may experience the first trimester of a pregnancy can be the most difficult. However, you can take heart since the first trimester of pregnancy only lasts about twelve weeks and the second trimester often has less symptoms. During these first few weeks of adjusting to being pregnant it can be a good idea, if possible, to take it a little easier on yourself and your body.

Fatigue, nausea, lightheadedness and breast tenderness are some of the symptoms that come with a first trimester pregnancy. If possible, this is a good time to squeeze in a little sleep. Some extra help right now will definitely benefit your body.

To help you throughout the pregnancy it is a good time to start developing some good nutrition habits. You will probably start feeling better in a few short weeks even if nausea curbs your appetite right now and you can get through the rest of your nine months with a good diet.

You may only see Dr. Oliver every four weeks during the first trimester of your pregnancy once the heartbeat has been seen. Dr. Oliver will make sure the early development of your baby goes smoothly by screening you for potential risks and complications. You will probably be scheduled for many other routine tests to ensure that both you and your baby progress normally after the first trimester of pregnancy. If problems are detected early, there may be interventions to help. In many cases, there is nothing that can be done if this is not progressing as a "normal" pregnancy.

There are things that you can begin to do during the first trimester of your pregnancy to prepare for the birth of your baby even if nine months seem like a long time. You can begin by reading the information provided by Dr. Oliver on the Total Women's Health website at [www.oliverobgyn.com](http://www.oliverobgyn.com). There are plenty of other resources available to provide education about your pregnancy and to stay informed about what is to come. You can start window shopping for maternity clothes, plan a budget for a larger family and work on travel plans around your pregnancy.



## *Maternal Women's Health of Baltimore* *Important Information About Your Pregnancy*

### **Important Information About the Second Trimester**

Congratulations! You are in the honey moon period of the pregnancy with the first trimester of nausea and fatigue gone and the third trimester of back pain and leg swelling not yet present. The second trimester includes the fourth, fifth and sixth months of pregnancy. You can expect:

#### **Monthly Visits to Dr. Oliver**

During these monthly visits, talk to Dr. Oliver about any concerns or symptoms you have had or that you are wondering about. Even if you may think they are insignificant, Dr. Oliver will want to know. Remember, there are no silly questions. Write it down, as it is not uncommon to forget these questions during your visit.

At about 20 weeks, Dr. Oliver will start measuring the size of your abdomen by centimeters from the top of your uterus (fundus) to your pubic bone. In most women, this measurement in centimeters is within 3 centimeters of the number of weeks you are. For example, a uterus measuring 27 centimeters (from pubic bone to fundus) roughly corresponds to a pregnancy between 24 and 30 weeks gestation. This is just an estimate. If Dr. Oliver is concerned about the growth of the baby, she will tell you.

Dr. Oliver will listen for the baby's heartbeat with a device called a Doppler.

You will start to feel your baby kicking and moving at around 20 weeks. Sometimes this can be later for women who are overweight. Tell Dr. Oliver when you first noticed movement. It has been described as a fluttering or tickling feeling.

Your urine will still be tested for levels of sugar, protein, blood and white blood cells. Urinalysis may also detect urinary tract infections. You will also be checked for signs of gestational diabetes between 24 and 28 weeks. This is a form of diabetes that is usually temporary and occurs during some women's pregnancy due to hormonal changes and genetics. 50% of women with gestational diabetes go on to have diabetes within the next twenty years.

Pelvic exams are generally not required in the second trimester, unless there is some concern such as abnormal vaginal discharge, bleeding, preterm labor or vulvar or vaginal lesions.

#### **Other tests may be offered**

A screening test called a QUAD screen combined with a first trimester screen for Down's Syndrome and some other chromosomal abnormalities will be performed. During the second trimester you will also be referred to a specialist called Maternal fetal Medicine (MFM) for a detailed ultrasound. If any of the results of any tests are abnormal, Dr. Oliver will discuss these results with you. Otherwise, no news is good news! Please do not call the office asking for test results. We will have an online portal where you can review your results if you so wish. But remember, these results need to be interpreted by a doctor and the average patient will only be confused

by them. If you have any concerns or questions, please discuss your concerns with Dr. Oliver at your next visit. Again, Dr. Oliver will notify you of any abnormal results.

### **Some physical changes to your body during the second trimester**

- ) Larger breasts as your milk producing glands inside your breasts grow bigger
- ) A bigger belly as your uterus expands for the baby. You may gain 4 pounds per month
- ) Braxton Hicks contractions strengthen your uterus. They feel like tightening and are often painless contractions that occur in the lower abdomen and groin area.
- ) Skin color changes due to increased circulation and stimulation of melanin – darker skin around the nipples, face and on the line that runs from your belly button to your pubic bone ( Linea nigricans)
- ) Increased blood circulation in your mucous membranes causing the lining of your nose and airway passage to swell, resulting in snoring, congestion and nosebleeds. The extra blood circulation may also cause bleeding in your gums while brushing and flossing.
- ) In order to accommodate increased blood flow and volume, blood vessels relax and expand leading to a decrease in blood pressure which may cause occasional dizziness. Try to drink plenty of fluid and don't stand up too fast as blood goes quickly from the brain to the organ that needs it (the legs) causing lightheadedness and dizziness.
- ) Leg cramps are caused by pressure from the uterus to the veins that return blood from your legs
- ) Heartburn and constipation is due to a slower digestive process that allows nutrition to reach your baby.
- ) Shortness of breath
- ) A normal vaginal discharge that is thin and white
- ) Increased chance of kidney and bladder infections due to slower flow of urine and an increase in the size of your uterus. Call Dr. Oliver if you suspect any vaginal or urinary tract infections.

During your second trimester, you will experience an increase in uncomfortable situations which Dr. Oliver likes to call “ normal discomforts of pregnancy”. You need to have a basic understanding of what is normal and what is not. Also remember, Dr. Oliver is there for both you and the baby.



## **otal Women's Health of Baltimore** **Important Information About Your Pregnancy**



### **Important Information About the Third Trimester**

Congratulations! You have approached the final stages of pregnancy! Dr. Oliver will need to monitor your blood pressure and weight more often. It will also remain very important to monitor the baby's heartbeat and movements. From 28 until 36 weeks, you have biweekly appointments. You will have weekly check-ups during the last month of your pregnancy.

#### **Being tested for group B strep**

One of the things you will be tested for in the third trimester is a bacterium called group B streptococcus, or GBS. About 1 in 4 women have GBS in the vagina and/or rectum. It is harmless in adults but can cause infection in the infant as the infant enters the birth canal. If GBS shows up on the swab (done between 35 and 37 weeks) from your vagina and rectum or is in your urine at any time during the pregnancy, you will be administered an intravenous antibiotic during your labor to help protect the baby. A woman with GBS who is not treated in labor has a 1 in 200 chance of transmitting it to her baby as opposed to a 1 in 4,000 chance of transmission if treated in labor with antibiotics.

#### **Resumption of vaginal exams**

During the pelvic exams In your third trimester, Dr. Oliver will check to see if your baby is positioned head first or butt first, also known as breech. Dr. Oliver may want to try to apply pressure to your abdomen to turn the baby. If the baby will not turn to the head-first position, you may need to have a cesarean delivery (C-section).

As you come closer to delivery your cervix will begin to soften and dilate.

#### **Physical changes to your body in the third trimester**

- ) Backaches and sore hips are common as your baby gains weight. Try sitting on chairs with a good back support, using a heating pad, or get Amanda, the massage therapist at Dr. Oliver's office to give you a massage. A maternity belt may also be helpful by taking pressure away from the back and pelvic areas. Ask Dr. Oliver about which maternity belt she recommends.
- ) Swelling of the feet and ankles are normal. You are retaining fluid as your blood vessels become dilated. This will leave your face and eyes puffy in the morning.
- ) Heartburn may occur
- ) Spider veins, varicose veins and hemorrhoids may occur. Try elevating your legs and drinking lots of water

- ) You may notice more stretch marks that become itchy
- ) Your breasts are still growing
- ) You may feel an increased pressure on your bladder
- ) A continuation of the Braxton Hicks contractions
- ) A total weight gain of 25-35 pounds if you are normal weight, 35 to 45 pounds if you are underweight and less than 20 pounds if you are overweight

During your last trimester, as your baby grows, so will your level of discomfort. The best thing to do is to keep in mind that you are almost there. Try doing positive things that will help you pass the time. Pamper yourself as much as possible.