Self-care during Pregnancy

Congratulations!!!

You are just a few weeks away from the greatest joy of your life. As you keep counting moments, do not be afraid. The journey to the greatest joy can be a joyride too. Your doctor will take care of your worries, clear all your doubts. Just follow some simple dietary and exercise regimens, maintain basic hygiene, and it will make things a lot easier for you.

**Do's**

- Exercise regularly, after consulting your doctor e.g. walking, yoga and meditation.
- Maintain personal hygiene by bathing, brushing teeth, trimming nails, regularly.
- Wear clean, loose, comfortable clothes. Wear clothes according to the season.
- Keep ambience and surroundings clean.
- Get enough sleep, minimum 8 hours.
- Consult your doctor before taking any medicine and take them regularly. The doctor will ask you to:
  - Take medications like folic acid during months 1-3, iron & calcium supplement from the 4th month onwards, etc.
  - Get 2 tetanus toxoid (TT) injections after the 5th month, 4 weeks apart
  - Get your blood and urine tests done.
- Visit your doctor for routine check-up once every month up to 6 months of pregnancy, once every 15 days in the 7th & 8th month & once every week in the 9th month. In case of emergencies such as severe abdominal pain or cramps, leaking of watery fluids from the vagina even if there is no pain, swelling of feet or hands, bleeding from the vagina & decrease/loss of foetal movement, contact your doctor.

**Avoid**

- Smoking & smoke-filled surroundings, lifting heavy weights, wearing high heels.
- Long journeys, crowded transport and bumpy rides. Consult your doctor before travelling.
- Sex if you have unexplained bleeding, history of miscarriage or premature labour, pregnancy with twins or triplets, or disorders of the placenta (primary site of nutrition and gas exchange between the mother and foetus). Consult your doctor regarding sex during pregnancy.
- Getting up suddenly from the bed if you feel dizzy or giddy. First turn to the side, sit and then stand up slowly.

**Diet**

- Avoid consumption of coffee, tea, preservatives (e.g. ajinomoto), alcohol, spicy and fried foods.
- Avoid excess salt intake in case of history of hypertension.
Take a diet that is rich in proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins. Foods that are rich in nutrients and could be taken during pregnancy are —

- **Proteins** - milk, pulses, legumes, nuts, cheese, whole grains, soybean, egg, meat.
- **Iron** - green leafy vegetables, dry fruits, whole grains, dates, lean red meat, fish, poultry.
- **Folic acid** - berries, green leafy vegetables, beans, orange juice, broccoli, nuts, fortified cereals.
- **Calcium** - green leafy vegetables, milk and milk products like cheese, ice cream, curd, fish.
- **Fats** - oil, ghee, sweets in small quantities.
- **Vitamins, minerals** - fruits (2-4 servings daily), vegetables (3-5 servings daily).

Nausea, vomiting & acidity are common during pregnancy and can be managed by taking toast, biscuits, frequent small meals, medications and plenty of fluids.

Average weight gain during pregnancy -

- **1st trimester**: 1kg
- **2nd trimester**: 5kg
- **3rd trimester**: 5kg
- **Total**: 11kg minimum

The weight gain depends on your weight prior to pregnancy.

For further details, kindly contact your doctor.

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