



# BABY

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Thinking of having a baby? Southwest General OB/GYN Dr. William K. Hahn, Jr., offers guidance on having a healthy—and enjoyable—pregnancy.

by **KenMcEntee**  
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**P**regnancy and preparation for parenthood is a time of wonder and anticipation. For most couples it is the prelude to the most joyous, yet most demanding, time of their lives.

“Pregnancy can be a time of stress and worry, but what couples should remember is that it’s a process that they probably are not going to go through very many times, so they should pause to enjoy each day of the experience,” advises William K. Hahn, Jr., MD, FACOG, an obstetrician/gynecologist on the Medical Staff at Southwest General.

Dr. Hahn says communication and understanding are essential to relieve the stress and uncertainty that can accompany the coming addition to the family.

“Pregnancy is a significant life transition that impacts both the father and the mother,” he says. “There are fears centering around the financial challenges of raising a family. For women, there is the added challenge of balancing a career and home life and the reassignment of home duties. Some women have a lot of stress over their body image in a society that is fixated on thinness. And, there is the stress over whether the child will be healthy. For the couple, being supportive of each other and communicating how they each are feeling is important.”

For the expectant mother, maintaining a

healthy lifestyle improves the conditions for the baby’s healthy development. That healthy lifestyle includes getting exercise and eating a balanced diet.

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“During a normal pregnancy, a woman can continue with most of her normal activities,” Dr. Hahn says. “If she exercises regularly before she gets pregnant, she should continue to do so, but I wouldn’t recommend high-impact aerobics with a lot of jumping or heavy impact with the floor. While exercising, a pregnant woman should be careful to keep her heart rate under 140 beats a minute. That’s because her heart is pumping twice the volume of blood that it does in the non-pregnant state, and it needs to have enough rest between each beat to allow it to refill. Also, we try to avoid exercises that involve lying on your back after the first trimester.”

If you have not exercised regularly prior to your pregnancy, Dr. Hahn suggests gradually easing into a routine.

“If a woman is obese, we recommend that for the health of mom and baby, she only gain 15 to 20 pounds during pregnancy, compared to 25 to 35 pounds for a woman who is of normal weight,” he says. “Weight gain during pregnancy is divided unevenly with half the weight gain occurring during the first two trimesters and half in the last trimester.”

Additionally, nutrition is important during pregnancy. Expectant mothers often don’t get enough protein or calcium in their diets, Dr. Hahn says. He suggests a calcium-rich diet that includes dairy products like cheese, milk and yogurt, along with broccoli. Dietary supplements are beneficial to supply what isn’t gained through food.

“Pregnant women should stay away from non-pasteurized cheeses like bleu cheese and Brie because of the risk of bacterial contamination,” he advises. “Also, they should limit servings of tuna to two or three a week, at most, because traces of mercury have been found in tuna. They should stay away from fish caught in the Great Lakes as well due to PCB (an industrial pollutant) contamination. Because pregnant women are particularly susceptible to listeriosis (which is a bacteria that can be found in processed meats from the meat packing plant), they should re-cook any processed luncheon meat before they eat it.”

Women who are expecting are advised to stay away from alcohol and tobacco, and to

limit caffeine products like coffee, tea and soda to one serving a day.

During pregnancy, women should visit an OB/GYN monthly to track the progress and health of the baby.

“When you look for a doctor, conduct interviews and choose somebody with whom you are comfortable,” Dr. Hahn suggests. “We all have our own different personalities. Find somebody who will sit and listen to you and understand what’s going on. Mother Nature designed us in a pretty neat way. As physicians, we are observers in the process. Our goal is for the mother and baby to go home healthy with the least intervention necessary. A happy ending to the story is what matters the most.”

*Dr. Hahn, a Southwest General board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist, is located at 7171 Royalton Rd., Suite 201, where he welcomes both current and new patients. Dr. Hahn has special interests in obstetrics, minimally invasive surgery, osteoporosis, urinary incontinence, abnormal Pap tests, abnormal periods, family planning and other women’s health issues. For more information, call Health Connection at 440-816-5050.*



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