

HealthWatch

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Enjoying a

Healthy Pregnancy

An appointment with the *Women's Health team of Southwest Medical Group, Inc.* can make all the difference.



by KenMcEntee

A visit to the doctor isn't necessarily a trip we look forward to with anticipation and excitement, but an appointment that concerns planning for a new baby is another story.

The six-physician Women's Health team of Southwest General Medical Group, Inc. has shared the joy of new life with thousands of delighted mothers.

"We deliver hundreds of babies each year," says David Seals, M.D., an obstetrician/gynecologist on the medical staff at Southwest General, who joined the practice about a year ago.



Natalya Dubchuk, M.D.



David Seals, M.D.

According to Dr. Seals and his colleague, Natalya Dubchuk, M.D., an obstetrician/gynecologist also on the medical staff at Southwest General, living a healthy lifestyle is always important, but especially so for a couple that is planning to have a baby or already expecting. "If you're thinking of becoming pregnant, you and your partner should be as healthy as possible at the time of conception," Dr. Seals advises. "Don't wait until you are pregnant to start living a healthy lifestyle."

Drs. Seals and Dubchuk share some things to consider as

you plan for a new addition to your family. The following, they say, are important to the health of both mom and baby.

- "Exercise helps to avoid health problems and reduces many complications that can occur during labor," Dr. Seals says. "When you become pregnant, don't be afraid to exercise, but as always, do it in moderation."

- Being overweight can cause health problems during pregnancy. "If you are overweight you should get down to your proper weight before you get pregnant," Dr. Dubchuk advises. "Being underweight can be an issue as well, but being overweight is normally a bigger problem."

- Eat healthy, with a good diet of fruits and vegetables. Eliminate or reduce your consumption of alcohol and caffeine.

- If you are taking any prescriptions or other medications, check with your doctor before you plan to conceive. Many medications are not recommended during pregnancy.

- Take a daily multi-vitamin that contains at least 400 i.u. of folic acid. "You don't have to spend a lot of money on expensive vitamins," Dr. Seals says. "Store brands are okay. The expensive ones will cost more but sometimes without any real additional benefits."

- If you have a medical condition like diabetes, a thyroid disorder or high blood pressure, you should have it under control as much as possible before you begin your pregnancy.

- Consult your physician as soon as possible upon discovering that you are pregnant.

- If you have a family history of medical conditions like cystic fibrosis or sickle cell

anemia, it's a good idea to be tested.

- Smoking can cause many complications," Dr. Seals cautions. "It can result in underdeveloped babies and increases the chance of mental retardation."

- Make sure all of your vaccinations are up to date, including measles, hepatitis, polio, tetanus and diphtheria. Be sure you are properly vaccinated for the flu during flu season.

"A lot of women don't come in for pre-conception planning," Dr. Dubchuk says. "We encourage women to do so, especially first time mothers who may be more anxious and may need more attention."

The group includes John Alton, M.D.; Shirley Bennett, M.D.; Kimberly Kraus, M.D.; Johanna O'Neill, M.D.; and Drs. Dubchuk and Seals.

With six physicians at three locations, Dr. Seals says, making an appointment is quick and easy. He notes that each of the group's locations—in the hospital in Middleburg Heights, in Strongsville and in Brunswick—are "one stop shops" for just about any type of test or service relating to women's health.

"We have radiology, labs, cardiologists and physical therapists at all three locations so you don't need to go off site for most tests," Dr. Seals says.

Southwest General Medical Group-- Women's Health team has three locations:

- 18181 Pearl Road, Suite B-206, in Strongsville: 440-816-5050;
- 4065 Center Road, Suite 214, in Brunswick: 330-558-0150;
- 7255 Old Oak Blvd., Suite C-202, in Middleburg Heights: 440-816-5050.

did you know?

Women's Health

The Women's Health team of Southwest General Medical Group, Inc. specializes in women's health issues, treating patients from teenagers to women who are well into menopause.

"We do everything from annual routine visits for preventive care to delivering babies to robotic surgery for gynecological issues," Dr. David Seals says. "Our goal is to keep women as healthy as possible."

"Consult your physician as soon as possible upon discovering that you are pregnant."

—Drs. Dubchuk and Seals