



Acadiana Ob/Gyn

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Respecting the Dignity of Women and building a new Culture of Life

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LAST TEN WEEKS OF PREGNANCY

1. Care during pregnancy in the last ten weeks becomes more frequent. During the last ten weeks, pregnant women should be seen initially at least every two weeks and then for the last four weeks of the pregnancy at least once a week. Your appointments will be made to reflect this schedule.
2. Pelvic examinations are not usually done until near the end of the pregnancy unless there are complications or suggestions of complications. After the exam during pregnancy, a woman may have some painless spotting within 48 hours of the exam. This should be considered normal, but if you become concerned you may return to the office for a re-evaluation.
3. During the last ten weeks of pregnancy, the discomforts become more intense. Low back aches and abdominal pain increase as well as pain in the upper legs. A vaginal discharge may be noticed that is white and pasty but sometimes rather heavy. Numbness in the hands is common and not usually indicative of illness. These symptoms are normal and should be discussed with the doctor or nurse at visits if they are severe.
4. Premature labor occurs in about 12% of patients. Contractions may be noted throughout your pregnancy and are not abnormal unless the frequency increases to where 6 or more are noticed in each hour. Should this pattern develop, you should be checked to be sure premature labor is not beginning. This most commonly would occur between 28 weeks of pregnancy and 36 weeks of pregnancy. Should these symptoms occur, you should call the office to be evaluated. If this occurs during the daytime when the office is open, call us and come in to be sure that the contractions are not causing cervical dilation. If the office is closed, it is necessary to go to Labor and Delivery to be evaluated.

ONSET OF LABOR

Most patients will notice the onset of labor near their due date. It is perfectly normal to go two weeks before or up to two weeks after the anticipated due date. The patient who is pregnant should look for the following symptoms:

A. When timed contractions (using a watch) from the beginning of one contraction to the beginning of the next are regularly 5 minutes apart or less, lasting one minute or more in duration for two hours, labor may be starting.

B. Rupture of membranes occur before the onset of labor in up to 10% of patients. Should you notice a sudden gush of clear fluid from the vagina, you should be examined to determine if fluid is actually leaking. In most cases the fluid will continue to leak after this initial gush. Many patients confuse leaking of the bladder with leaking of amniotic fluid. If you are uncertain it is best to be evaluated.

C. Vaginal bleeding may occur towards the end of pregnancy and may be associated with cervical dilation. Should you bleed a small amount associated with the passage of mucus after an exam or sexual intercourse, this bleeding is probably normal.

*****WHEN ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS OCCUR AND YOU THINK THAT YOU MAY NEED TO BE SEEN OR MAY BE IN LABOR, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS:**

A. If the office is **open**, call the office and come in to be seen.

B. If the office is **closed**, but it is during usual waking hours (6 am – 10 pm) please call our office and the answering service will connect you to me or with the physician on call, to acknowledge that you are going to the hospital.

C. If this occurs between the hours of **10 pm – 6 am**, please proceed to the hospital **without** calling. The nurses will do an evaluation and then call me.

ADMISSION TO THE HOSPITAL

For admission to the hospital, go to the Pavilion entrance from 5:30 am – 9:00 pm. After 9 pm, go through the Emergency room entrance at the hospital.

HOSPITAL STAY

Typical hospital stays vary on the type of delivery. For a vaginal delivery, discharge is planned after the first 24 hours, sometimes requiring a 2 day stay. For a Cesarean Section, many women are ready to go home after 48 hours, but sometimes require 3 to 4 days if there are any complications or recovery is delayed for any reason. It is recommended that you know from your insurance company what your approved maximum stay is in case decisions must be made in the hospital.

POST PARTUM INSTRUCTIONS

POST PARTUM VISIT: Please call our office the week following your delivery to schedule your next appointment. If a Cesarean section was needed, your appointment will be made 1-2 weeks after delivery to check your incision and then at 6 weeks to be sure that physically you have returned to normal before being discharged to regular activity. If a vaginal delivery occurred, your appointment will be made 4-6 weeks after delivery to do a post partum pap smear (if needed) and pelvic exam to make sure all is back to normal.

ACTIVITIES: It is recommended that for the first 7-14 days after delivery that you spend time resting at home tending to the needs of your infant. After this time period, assuming that all healing is proceeding at the normal pace, you may begin to drive, walk, and resume other activities as needed around the house. You should continue to take your prenatal vitamins once a day for at least 6 weeks after delivery and indefinitely if you are nursing. Laxatives may be needed for bowel irregularity after delivery. Fiber laxatives are generally recommended as the treatment of choice. You should follow a healthy diet with vegetables, fruits, protein, and fat. Drinking large quantities of water may help you feel better and avoid constipation.

Sometimes woman may notice a reduction in the amount of breast milk. If this should occur, an over the counter herbal supplement called "More Milk Plus" can be purchased at Professional Arts Pharmacy.

The return of fertility after child bearing will be discussed at your post partum visit. Marital relations may be resumed 4-6 weeks after delivery if both of you are comfortable with it assuming there are no complications. Hemorrhoids are very common during the post partum period and can be treated with Preparation H. Most of the other medications and instructions for your recovery from your delivery will be given out from the hospital before you are discharged. If there are any questions or problems, please call the office during regular office hours at 261-5433.

It is our hope that the birth of your child has been a pleasant experience. Thank you for allowing us to participate in this time of your life. The most important thing that you will ever do is to bring a new life into this world. If there are any ways in which you think that we can improve your care, please feel free to discuss this with us at your next visit.