



Things to
Avoid for the
Sake of
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Dealing with the ultimate responsibility of being a parent is one of the hardest tasks for anyone to take, especially for the woman since she carries the baby inside her womb for about nine months. Yes, becoming a parent involves a lot of tasks and responsibilities and a great sense of compassion, strength, dedication, knowledge, patience and most of all, protectiveness not only for the sake of the parent but also for the sake of the unborn.

So now, if you happen to be bearing a child in your womb, then be ready to take all the responsibilities that every soon-to-be parent is about to embark. Perhaps one of the most important responsibilities that you could ever do for your unborn child is to learn about things that may harm your baby and how to avoid them.

There are a lot of things actually that can pose serious, real threats to your unborn baby. So if you want to bear and deliver your child normally, then I bet considering those threatening things is a remarkable move to take.

What are the things to avoid during pregnancy? Consider the following:

Cigarette Smoking

I am a hundred percent sure that most of you know the fact that cigarette smoking is highly prohibited for pregnant women. It is basically for several, worth noting reasons mentioned below.

The primary reason that pregnant women are not allowed to smoke while bearing the baby on their womb is the fact the chemical inhaled while smoking may cause

premature birth, bleeding, miscarriage, and other abnormal effects. Aside from that, smoking during pregnancy can stop the blood flowing from a mother to her unborn baby. According to some medical studies, this is what basically triggers miscarriage to occur. It may also reduce the amount of oxygen that your baby receives. And, most of all, smoking can pose a threat to your child's health, opening and inviting for certain defects to occur.

There are more unfavorable effects of cigarette smoking to pregnant women than those mentioned above. Several studies have found out that smoking during pregnancy may cause your baby to be born underweight. This idea stems from the fact that when a soon-to-be mother smoke during pregnancy, she may not put on weight while bearing the unborn child, and this is what hurts the baby who is trying to grow inside her. So when your baby is born early and underweight, expect then to have a baby that is sickly. Your baby in fact may develop physical and mental defects.

If you don't want those unfavorable conditions to happen, then simply do something to avoid smoking, whether first hand or second hand smoking. Besides, it's never too late to quit.

Alcohol Drinking

You probably have heard someone trying to say, "Don't drink alcohol. That's bad for your baby!" It could be your husband, your parents, a friend, or it could be your inner self who is talking to you not to drink alcohol. Well, the best thing that you can do is to listen to them. Although you might think that it's you who will bear the consequences in the end, always remember that you are not alone anymore. A human being of your own blood and flesh is trying to survive inside you. Don't jeopardize your baby's development, instead help him or her grow healthy and naturally.

Below is a list of some of the worth noting facts about alcohol drinking during pregnancy:

- Alcohol is considered throughout the world as drug, and can hurt your body.
- When taken, the alcohol passes through the placenta to your baby, meaning that when you drink alcohol, your baby does too.
- Studies have shown that mothers who drink during pregnancy have the risk of delivering a child with brain defects.
- A baby born to a mother who consumes alcohol may develop heart problems.
- The baby may also be underweight than a normal baby.
- Fetal alcohol syndrome or the result of alcohol exposure in the womb may occur, further causing serious mental and physical defects that may last for the rest of your baby's life.
- Alcohol is harmful towards the growth of the baby's organs.
- There is no known evidence to show how much alcohol is too much. That would even be impossible.

Since alcohol poses a lot of dangers to your unborn child, there is no reason for you then to continue drinking. It is highly necessary to note that up to these days, there is no known safe amount for alcohol consumption during pregnancy, so it better to abandon this habit completely. But, in case you've find a difficulty in quitting, ask for assistance. You can contact and ask your doctor or look for support and treatment centers that could help you quit alcohol drinking.

Drug Use

Do you find yourself taking illegal drugs? Now that you are pregnant, stop using it. According to some studies conducted by the National Institute on Drug

Abuse, when a woman who happens to be pregnant takes drugs, chances are she and her unborn child will develop serious health problems. But, how possible is this to happen?

As far as I know, the drugs used by the pregnant woman can enter the baby's bloodstream during pregnancy. Because of this, the possibility for the child to carry serious defects is high. Studies have revealed that the unborn child can be infected with HIV, AIDS, prematurity, small head size, poor motor skills, low birth weight, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, behavior problems, and stunted growth. Worst of all, your baby might develop brain damage.

Here are some facts about the common illegal drugs that may harm your unborn child when used:

- Marijuana, also known as “weed”, contains tar. This is also present in cigarettes. When taken, such chemical produces carbon monoxide which is capable of threatening the health of your baby in the same that cigarettes do.
- Cocaine, methamphetamines, ecstasy, heroine, and other street drugs may cause certain dangerous effects not only to your health, but also to the health of your baby.

So if you happen to be using any of the widely recognized drugs, such as those mentioned above, then it is best to talk to an expert about how you can make a change in your unfavorable lifestyle. You can also ask for help from the other supporting experts. Consider counseling, if possible.

Caffeine Intake

Caffeine has remained as one of the hottest, controversial issues in pregnancy nutrition for over a decade. Perhaps the first issue that has something to do with caffeine and pregnancy appeared in 1980s when a particular study was conducted by the Food and Drug Administration and it was found out that caffeine pose certain threats to unborn children as it causes birth defects and delayed skeletal development. Well, actually the trial was conducted on pregnancy rats, but later on what has been found out in animals also holds true in humans. Because of this, pregnant women are highly advised to eliminate caffeine from their diets.

Numerous researches, however, found out that moderate intake of caffeine is okay. Nutritionists have maintained a general rule which holds that the caffeine intake of a pregnant woman should only be limited to about lesser than 300 milligrams for a day. This limit is highly considered for the reason that this substance is highly diuretic. “Diuretic” means that caffeine assists the elimination of the fluid in the body. So if this is case, over intake of caffeine may then result in the loss of calcium and water in the body, which may supposedly aid the growth of the unborn baby.

With those researches, it’s no wonder now that pregnant women are highly advised to drink plenty of water, milk and juice instead of those beverages that are caffeinated. I think this warning is also considered knowing that this substance can affect fetal heart rates and is highly associated with premature birth, miscarriage, withdrawal symptoms in babies, and low birth weight. What’s more, large amount of caffeine may increase the risk of stretch marks for pregnant mothers. So if you are addicted with caffeine and can’t stop it immediately, then try to quit from that unfavorable habit gradually. Again, it’s never too late.

Dieting

There is a lot to be said about dieting for pregnant women. Of course, this includes the right foods to eat, but the main focus here is those foods that must be avoided. So what basically are the foods that pregnant women should avoid? Note the following:

Fish

Fish is no doubt an excellent option for a healthy diet. But, it doesn't hold true at all times. There are certain kinds of fish that are harmful for the unborn children – those fish that contain mercury or industrial pollutants. With this idea, it is then a wise move for every expecting mother to consult their doctor or their health department for about the right kinds of fish to eat. Your doctor can offer advice on the safety of fish, so don't just disregard the chance of knowing what is and what is not best for you.

Fats

Unbelievable as it may seem, the average of the American foods we usually eat contains about 37 percent fat. Yes, that's what most of the reliable studies have shown, and it is bothering to know that the average percentage has largely surpassed the healthy diet limit of 20 percent fat.

Experts have noted that during pregnancy, mothers should not exceed from that level of percentage. The truth of the matter is, every pregnant woman only needs 5 percent total fat in their diet to stay healthy. So there's no need for you to be bothered and worry about not getting enough fat, either as 5 percent fat will do make you strong and healthy. Note that enough cholesterol will help make your little angel healthy.

Junk Foods

Warnings for junk food intake during pregnancy may not be new to you. You probably have heard someone telling you not to eat much junk food while pregnant. To tell you frankly, they are certainly true. Junk foods will only provide you empty calories without giving the nutritional benefits of healthier foods that you should have been acquiring. So although it may seem impossible to resist eating those caramel candy bars and chips, try to control your cravings. You can eat an apple instead.

Soft Cheese

Soft cheese is also a matter of “avoidance” during pregnancy. The idea stems basically from the fact that soft cheese, also known as listeria, is a type of bacteria present in some types of cheese, such as white, soft, and Mexican style cheeses. If you happen to eat a cheese infected by this bacterium, there is also a great possibility that you and your child will be infected. To avoid the risk, don’t eat soft cheeses. As simple as that!

Raw and Undercooked Meat

Raw and undercooked meats are also highly prohibited for pregnant women. This idea perhaps originates from the studies conducted by the FDA Consumer which hold that a substance known as toxoplasmosis can be acquired by consuming raw and uncooked meat. When taken, the toxoplasmosis can also be transmitted to the fetus as it passes the placenta. However, this threatening substance can only be transmitted if the mother has active infection during the pregnancy period. Well, what’s worse about this substance is that it may cause miscarriage, pre-term birth and stillbirth.

Herbal Teas

Herbs generally sound harmless. But the truth of the matter is, herbs may have powerful effects that could not be good for pregnant women. This is the reason

basically that some nutritionists strongly discourage pregnant mothers in taking herbal teas during pregnancy. So if you happen to be addicted with green tea, ginseng, raspberry tea, slippery elm, and other varieties, better quit from this habit. These mentioned teas, according to some studies, may stimulate contractions, which is very harmful for pregnant women.

Too Much Exercise

Exercise is no doubt healthy for everybody, including women who are pregnant. However, it doesn't mean that all levels of exercising are best for everyone. There is what we call as moderate and too much exercise. Well, moderate exercise, as the name implies, is a good thing. It may be helpful for developing mother's mental state and it can even increase the flow of oxygen from the mother's body to the fetus. The threat happens then when you consider too much exercise. So, while you are pregnant, better consider walking, swimming, yoga or some forms of moderate exercise. Remember that too much can kill.

Having said all that, I can now easily agree to the common aphorism that "preventing is better than curing". If you find yourself opting to prevent possible illness and ill effects to your present health and well-being, rather than going for a cure, then you are on the right track. So don't do things that may harm your body affecting your baby's health. You can avoid all those harmful things mentioned above by simply having a sense of discipline and control. Start being extra careful about your health the moment you get pregnant and stay that way to ensure your unborn child, a healthy life while inside your womb and when he or she is on his/her own later in life.

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