



*Center for Women's Health*

### **For Your Information - Part III**

Your baby is experiencing a growth spurt; he or she is somewhere between six and ten inches long and weights between four and ten ounces. His or her muscles are stronger now and you may begin to feel movement (called quickening) at this time. Please make a note on your calendar when you begin to feel movement and let us know in the office at your next visit.

The earliest fetal movements (movements of your baby) are very gentle and are difficult to distinguish from gas movements. You may notice a gentle tapping sensation in your lower abdomen. As time passes and the movements become stronger you will be able to distinguish them easily from other sensations in your abdomen.

Due to the increasing size of your baby, your uterus no longer fits down low in your pelvic cavity but rises up into the abdomen. This causes stretching to occur in the round ligaments (rubber-band like structures that support the uterus). Most women feel some discomfort with this stretching, called round ligament pain. It may take the form of a continuous dull ache and/or an intermittent sharp pain in the groin area usually associated with standing up as you get out of a chair, turning over in bed, or a sudden direction change. If this pain is bothersome we recommend avoiding sudden movements. Tylenol and/or warm baths may also be helpful.

Changes in the size of your uterus may also cause pressure on the sciatic nerve which can lead to pain in the pelvic area, the low back and down the thigh. Some women notice this as a prickling feeling and/or numbness. Sleeping on your side with one leg bent and resting on a pillow may lessen this discomfort. Massage and moist heat may also help. If after trying these ideas you are still uncomfortable please discuss it with us.

From about the fourth month of pregnancy your uterus begins to tighten and relax in preparation for labor. Some people notice this tightening and relaxing, called Braxton-Hicks contractions, as early as the fourth month of pregnancy but others do not notice them until near term. In contrast to real labor, these contractions are irregular and do not become progressively stronger. Walking may lessen these contractions. If you are tense these contractions may be more pronounced; therefore, trying to relax your muscles may help. Sometimes a warm bath or shower is also helpful. These contractions do not mean you need to discontinue any of your regular activities. But it is also true being less active and rest may help decrease contractions. **If you experience bleeding or a gush of clear fluid from the vagina in association with these contractions, call the office.**

#### **Pregnancy Points to Remember:**

If you develop **cold symptoms** you may take plain Tylenol® (up to 1000 mg every 6 hours, as needed, but no more than 4000 mg per day) for discomfort. You may use chlorpheniramine maleate (e.g. Chlortabs®) for stuffy nose and Robitussin DM or plain Robitussin cough syrup. Dayquil or Nyquil caps may be used in the second trimester, but not before. A little extra vitamin C (500 mg per day) and zinc tablets (30 mg) may help you get over your cold a little sooner. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids and get extra rest. All cough drops and throat lozenges are allowed.

Please call us if you develop a **fever** above 100.6 that lasts longer than 24 hours or longer.

If you have **vaginal bleeding**, abdominal cramping associated with vaginal spotting or bleeding, or have urinary frequency with burning please call our nurse in the office.

Remember, **good nutrition** is important for you and your baby. Please review the nutrition guidelines at this time.