



*Center for Women's Health*

## **For Your Information - Part II**

### **Did You Know?**

During pregnancy, your growing uterus takes up part of the working space for your digestive system. Progesterone, the predominate hormone of pregnancy, also slows intestinal activity. This may cause changes in your bowel habits sometimes resulting in constipation or diarrhea. If constipation is a problem, increase the amount of water you drink (six to eight large glasses a day is usually sufficient). Exercise, such as daily walking, and high fiber foods (fresh fruits and vegetables, bran cereal and whole grain bread) will help prevent or control constipation. If these suggestions do not relieve your constipation, call the office and talk with our nurses.

Indigestion or heartburn can also occur as a result of slowing of the digestive system. In addition the enlarging uterus crowds your stomach, which may also lead to indigestion. Eating smaller but more frequent meals will help control this symptom. It is safe to use an antacid such as Maalox, Mylanta, or Tums, but do not use baking soda to control indigestion.

Frequent urination is a normal change in early and late pregnancy. Extremely frequent urination, accompanied by burning, pain, or fever may signal a urinary tract infection. This condition requires treatment with antibiotics to prevent more serious problems. Please call the office if symptoms of a urinary tract infection occur.

### **How Is Your Baby Growing?**

By the end of the first three months your baby is about 3-1/2 inches long and weighs about half an ounce. He or she has a human appearance even to the extent of having fingernails and eyelids and his or her sex is discernible. The baby is making breathing movements, the heart has been beating for about two months now and the kidneys are beginning to function. The baby's muscles are weak but are beginning to contract. As they get stronger over the next month you will begin to feel the baby moving.