

JANUARY NEWSLETTER: THE DANGER OF OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS to the PREGNANT WOMAN AND HOW CHIROPRACTIC CAN HELP CREATE A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER AND COMFORTABLE PREGNANCY.

And welcome to Part I of our Two Part January newsletter!

Yes, the word is now out...

Yep, I'm expecting... a baby that is! Mike and I have undertaken that scary/exciting/overwhelming project of bringing a wonderful new life to the world. And what a ride it has been the last four months! By the way, stay tuned for our fun, baby-oriented contest!

Pregnancy means lots and lots of changes for the body of the expectant mother. Especially in the first trimester, progesterone and estrogen get pumped throughout the system causing everything from joint and ligament laxity (which means more frequent subluxations), headaches, morning sickness (nothing quite like driving the porcelain bus), increased urinary frequency (and just in case you thought the Almighty didn't have a sense of humor) incontinence with every little sneeze, cough and laugh.

Even though the first trimester has its ups and downs, nature has her plan straight. All of the changes in a woman's body are for specific reasons. For example, the rib cage can expand up to 10 cm even in the first 8 weeks of pregnancy ensuring proper oxygen exchange. It can also cause sore backs and ribs. Often mom's nose and sinuses will get stuffy. This is because hormones cause a large increase in the vascular bed of mom's body. This helps to ensure adequate blood flow between her and the baby.

Although Mother Nature has her plan in action, these changes also can imply discomfort. For those not acquainted with the benefits of chiropractic care, this can lead ladies to reach for the nearest over-the-counter medications in search of relief. It is really important to remember that just because a medication is sold over-the-counter this does NOT mean it is safe to take during pregnancy.

Let me give you an example. Recently we had one of our old-time practice members, who is in the middle of her first trimester of pregnancy with her first child, come into our office. She's been struggling with some of the changes going on in her body including headaches, which are often related to subluxations in the neck as well as the rise in progesterone. Not able to come to our office right away, she called her obstetrician's office to see if it would be okay for her to take an Advil to relieve her symptoms. Unfortunately the office said, "Yes, go ahead". YIKES!!! When I heard this, I was totally astounded. Studies as recent as the August 16, 2003 edition of the British Medical

Journal, have shown that women who take aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, Alleve and Aspirin) increase their risk of miscarriage by 80%. Wow.

How does this work? Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs, for short) work by suppressing the natural production of a body chemical called prostaglandins. Prostaglandins are actually fatty acids that are essential for the successful implantation of an embryo into the wall of the uterus among serving many other functions. Because NSAIDs work on the whole body, not just the part that hurts, this can cause abnormal implantation of an embryo and lead to miscarriage. It pays to be careful, very careful.

Remember that even the most caring and dedicated physicians hardly have the time to manage their own patients let alone keep on top of all of the literature out there about the literal thousands of medications available on the market today. So, do your homework. Research the web, the library, and subscribe to magazines like Mothering which promote natural, healthy lifestyles for families.

That's it for now. Stay tuned for more information on preventative care for pregnant women including chiropractic and methods for turning off morning sickness!

**AND NOW FOR OUR BIRTHDAY CONTEST!**

Starting now and ending on May 20th, 2005, we are holding a poll to see who can guess the correct sex and birth date of the baby! All correct answers will be placed in a pot and one lucky winner will be drawn. The winner will receive dinner for four at Glory Days Grill. Start gazing at those crystal balls and GOOD LUCK!.