

### **What are the trimesters of pregnancy?**

The duration of pregnancy is in total 42 weeks. The entire period is divided into 3 periods.

- 1<sup>st</sup> trimester is from 1-12weeks,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> from 13-27weeks
- 3<sup>rd</sup> from 28-42weeks.

### **What blood tests are routinely performed in pregnancy?**

- An antenatal screen (either including or excluding HIV) is performed. This includes a full blood count and platelets to screen for anaemia, blood group, syphilis, hepatitis and rubella status.
- In cases of very early pregnancy, a quantitative B-HCG test may be requested

### **What is the average weight gain for a healthy woman and an obese woman during pregnancy?**

- For a healthy woman- average of 13kg
- For an obese woman (BMI > 30)- 6Kg

### **What is a nuchal translucency scan?**

This is a scan that can only be performed between 11-13W6D. The scan is able to inform you whether you are at a high or low risk of having a baby with Down's syndrome and other chromosomal or structural abnormalities by evaluating the amount of fluid behind the baby's neck. This test has 2 components to it. You will need to perform a blood test and have the scan. The scan is usually done by a fetal specialist.

### **What is an anatomy scan?**

This is a detailed scan which examines the fetal body with special attention to the brain, fetal face, heart, kidneys, bladder, spine, stomach and limbs. If there are any

abnormalities noted this is then further discussed. The scan is done only between 18-23weeks.

### **Is it safe to colour/dye my hair during pregnancy?**

There is limited evidence on this topic, but it is generally thought to be ok. If you are concerned, consider colouring during the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester when the baby is less susceptible to harmful agents. Also consider the use of pure henna (*Lawsonia inermis*).

### **Is it safe to have intercourse during pregnancy?**

If there are no problems noted during the pregnancy such as vaginal bleeding, recurrent infections, preterm labour etc, then it is generally safe to have intercourse, however, note that positioning might be difficult during the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester due to the size of mom and baby.

### **What is an episiotomy?**

This is a surgical incision on the perineum during the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of labour. It is not routinely performed. Current evidence dictates that it should only be performed when the obstetrician wants to get the baby out soon (e.g. in cases when the heart beat of the baby is non-reassuring) or when an assisted delivery is to be performed.

### **Is it safe to exercise in pregnancy?**

Yes, exercise is recommended during pregnancy. You can continue with your routine after discussion with your obstetrician. Contact sport, scuba diving, and horse-riding are not recommended. Swimming is good provided you take care when getting in and out of the pool.

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