**Health Pregnancy**

Student Full Name:

Institutional Affiliation:

Course Full Title:

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Due Date:

**Healthy Pregnancy**

A wise woman once stated that women are smart enough to amass a fortune, strong enough to give birth, and fully able to return to work afterward; their resilience as far as childbirth is concerned is remarkable. Pregnancy is a biological process in which life develops in a woman's womb for nine months. Pregnancy is one of life's most incredible experiences and can be one of the safest and healthiest life-changing when adequately managed. During this period, a woman experiences several physical changes that alter her body's composition and operation. Thus, keeping healthy habits at this time is crucial for the mother and fetus. Maintaining physical fitness and appropriate prenatal care while expecting is essential as this promotes the baby's optimal growth and positively impacts the mother's physical and mental well-being.

**Physical Fitness**

One notable role that exercise plays in the lives of pregnant women is giving them a sense of belonging. Most people assume pregnant women should take it easy and avoid strenuous activity. In reality, there are plenty of reasons why working out during pregnancy can be beneficial for mothers and their babies. Exercise helps women maintain their strength and endurance, which is extremely important during pregnancy and beyond. It also helps improve mood, balance, and flexibility, which are essential to new parents. Additionally, exercise boosts self-esteem and confidence by developing muscle tone and increasing bone density, which makes it easier for moms-to-be to carry their babies. Regular, rhythmic exercises like walking, biking, and swimming are rigorous enough to increase the amount of oxygen supplied to the muscles but are not so difficult as to cause oxygen shortage (Bellefonds, 2021). These exercises boost blood circulation, which improves the flow of oxygen and other nutrients to the developing baby. They also enhance the body's potential to absorb and use oxygen. Moreover, they lessen the chances of varicose veins, fluid retention, and hemorrhoids, thus developing endurance while improving muscle tone and strength. Engaging in exercise improves expectant women’s confidence and encourages better sleep.

**Appropriate Prenatal Care**

Prenatal care is critical to an expectant woman and their unborn child as it ensures the baby's normal development and early detection of problems. All women in today's society, from those as young as fifteen to those nearing menopause, are eligible for childbearing. Regardless of one's age, prenatal care is something that every woman must consider to ensure a successful pregnancy and delivery of a healthy child (Madell, 2015). As mentioned, prenatal care is a medical service that offers pregnant women the opportunity to stay healthy and well-nourished and lowers their chances of birthing children with congenital disabilities. The health of the unborn child and expectant mother depends greatly on prenatal care as it reveals how a baby develops and grows during pregnancy.

Pregnancy scans and prenatal care are things to consider when a woman is expecting a baby. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), pregnant women should seek professional help from a physician trained in women's health during pregnancy. Prenatal care includes recommended screenings, tests, and treatment for common conditions that can affect one's pregnancy, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and asthma. A prenatal visit also includes diet, exercise, and smoking cessation counseling.

Technology in medicine facilitates prenatal examinations, including screening and diagnostic procedures. Prenatal care has been a significant focus of technological progress. The advent of ultrasound technology and MR imaging was a game-changer for obstetricians and their patients. These machines have allowed doctors to see inside the womb and make accurate diagnoses based on images displayed on the monitor. Ultrasounds help to detect fetal abnormalities, gestational diabetes, and congenital disabilities, whereas MRIs have allowed doctors to view the brains of fetuses in utero (Doctor.ndtv.com, 2018). The latter also show details inside the head that were previously only visible through operation or autopsies. The ability to see inside the womb has enabled obstetricians to spot some congenital malformations that could only be diagnosed with surgery at birth or after birth. Therefore, introducing new technologies has enabled doctors to access more information about their patients' health than before. As a result, they can provide better care to expectant mothers by increasing the fetus' survival chances outside the womb.

Screening procedures cannot establish a reliable diagnosis. If statistics indicate a higher-than-average risk for genetic illnesses, the expecting mother's doctor discusses her options for a clinical diagnostic test to confirm the diagnosis. Amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling are the two primary techniques used in diagnostic testing. Conversely, prenatal screenings can sometimes spot treatable issues while pregnant or notify the obstetricians of an issue that needs to be treated right after birth. Only a diagnostic test can provide a diagnosis with absolute certainty.

Pregnant women must eat healthy diets to supply their unborn babies with the necessary nutrients for growth and development. Pregnancy is a period of rapid growth and development of the fetus, which increases the need for healthy nutritional intake. To be specific, pregnant women should consume a balanced diet high in fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, lean protein, eggs, seafood, and low-fat dairy products. Additionally, they must select dairy products with little or no fat rather than fatty ones. Hopkins (2019) advises them to limit the intake of fatty meats, such as bacon, ham, or sausages, high-fat spreads, such as butter, fried foods, and high-calorie snacks, such as cookies. They must also drink plenty of fluids (water preferably), especially in hot weather, avoid alcohol consumption, choose low-sodium canned foods over processed ones, and avoid smoking when pregnant, as this increases the possibility of premature birth. Lastly, expectant women should take folic acid supplements if they are at a high risk of congenital disabilities, for example, if they have suffered miscarriages.

Conversely, pregnant women are discouraged from consuming raw or undercooked meat, seafood, or eggs because these foods risk the mother's and the unborn child's lives. If they need to take additional vitamin supplements, their doctor can supply additional nutrients, such as fatty acids, that may benefit their overall health. Prenatal care educates women on the necessary measures they can take to safeguard their unborn child and guarantee successful pregnancies and delivery.

Expectant mothers need to maintain physical fitness and receive the proper prenatal care while pregnant to ensure the babies' good health and the mothers' physical and emotional wellbeing. Besides, attending prenatal care clinics throughout pregnancy and engaging in physical fitness help minimize pregnant women's health risks and reduce congenital disability rates. With appropriate prenatal care, women reduce the chances of birthing premature and underweight babies, and improve their quality of life. While early prenatal care and exercise are necessary for successful pregnancies, a balanced diet helps expectant moms and their unborn children reach their health and wellbeing potential.

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