**Importance of Prenatal Care**

Prenatal care is extensively acknowledged as a type of preventative healthcare vital in enhancing pregnancy results. Prenatal care helps monitor the pregnancy development cycle that begins from conception and stops at birth. During this period, healthcare professionals gather details such as a pregnant mother's social, medical, and family history. The significance of prenatal care is entrenched in its efforts to guarantee safety and good health for pregnant women by looking out for risks. During antenatal treatment, medical practitioners put extensive effort into increasing a pregnant mother's health and reducing the chances of risks throughout the pregnancy and at the time of birth. While prenatal care ensures that the mother and fetus are healthy and free from complications, pregnant mothers must constantly visit healthcare professionals to seek guidance and education on keeping their pregnancy healthy.

**Maintaining the Health of the Mother and the Fetus**

Prenatal care helps keep a pregnant woman and the unborn baby healthy. Whereas most pregnancies usually progress without problems, prenatal visits are necessary. Prenatal care is a foundation for a healthy gestation, labor, and the unborn child. The reason is that, during pregnancy, prenatal examinations are used to guarantee that both the mother and fetus are progressing as required. Mothers who fail to seek prenatal care put their offspring at a higher risk of losing lives and having a lower weight at birth than women who get prenatal care (Pearl & Howell, 2021). Besides, pregnant women that do not get prenatal care are seven times more likely to produce premature offspring and five times as likely to experience newborn loss. In this respect, the tests done during prenatal care help detect potential problems, such as gestational diabetes, hypertension, and preeclampsia, which are consequently treated. Similarly, prenatal care help keep track of the baby's development by measuring a pregnant mother's belly from the sternum to the uppermost part of the pubic bone. Therefore, seeking timely and consistent prenatal care can help a pregnant mother have a full-term and healthy gestation.

**Preventing Complications Associated With Pregnancies**

Prenatal care averts the difficulties and complications of pregnancy and parturition. Nevertheless, certain pregnancy complications emerge, even in mothers with low risks. To prevent these problems, prenatal care providers ensure that the process has achieved various goals. First, prenatal care providers encourage a healthy lifestyle. Such include a consistent, balanced diet, moderate exercise, evading consumption or being around dangerous substances, and upholding proper control of any preexistent health conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes (Milcent & Zbiri, 2018). Second, prenatal care providers ensure appropriate treatment and medical care. Healthcare professionals offer prenatal vitamins during prenatal care to warrant suitable nutrients for the developing baby and the mother. Notably, folic acid, also found in most foods, is the primary substance in most vitamins. Chedid and Phillips (2019) denote that folic acid can reduce the risk of neural tube deficiencies by up to 70 percent. Lastly, depending on a pregnant mother's age, family and medical history, and family history, a prenatal care provider such as an obstetrician or gynecologist may suggest some medical examinations. For instance, amniocentesis is a standard medical test done in the second trimester (Flanagan et al., 2018). The test is mainly used to examine genetic anomalies like Down syndrome, inspect the fetus's health if the mother has Rh sensitization, or confirm if the baby's lungs have matured. Consequently, an expectant mother should ensure she regularly visits the doctor and uses the necessary medication to experience a complications-free pregnancy.

**Educating Expectant Mothers About Their Health**

Moreover, prenatal care is vital in counseling and educating pregnant mothers concerning their health conditions. Expectant mothers need constant support and guidance from healthcare professionals regarding their health status. As such, healthcare professionals teach and guide pregnant mothers through the prenatal treatment procedure. First, mothers-to-be are taught nutrition and dietary habits. A pregnant mother's diet may need modifications to meet the nutritional requirements of the fetus. Healthcare professionals may give the expectant mother detailed information about recommended nutritional intake exclusive for her throughout the pregnancy, comprising what she must not eat (Errico et al., 2018). For instance, an expectant mother only needs around 350 additional daily calories for a single fetus. Second, an expectant mother always gets to learn **about labor and childbirth**. Finally, the mother-to-be and the partner must make labor and parturition plans.

Nevertheless, laying down the plan often depends on the mother's knowledge regarding labor and parturition processes (Masjoudi et al., 2020). The prenatal visits allow a mother-to-be to deliberate these processes, possible scenarios, inquiries, and worries with the doctor. The mother-to-be also learns about the benefits and risks of each treatment and intervention available in every scenario.

**Conclusion**

Prenatal care is widely recognized as an essential element in improving pregnancy outcomes. Some of the benefits of prenatal care include keeping the mother-to-be and the fetus healthy, preventing and minimizing difficulties throughout the pregnancy term and at the time of childbirth, and providing counseling and education to the mother on nutrition and lifestyle habits as labor and delivery processes. As a result, an expecting mother must seek prenatal care as soon as possible to ensure minimal or complications-free pregnancy and childbirth.

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