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## Early Pregnancy Consultation – First Trimester

Caring for you and your baby: the Do's and Don'ts for the first 12 weeks!



### Rest

Sore painful breasts and tiredness are the most common symptoms of pregnancy. Your body is going through significant changes whilst your baby is being developed and it is important that you adjust your lifestyle

accordingly. Rest as much as possible, you are likely to feel ready for your bed much earlier than usual. This is not the time to take on any extra work or pressure. As far as possible keep stress to a minimum.

### Exercise

For the first 12 weeks consider stopping all forms of high impact and aerobic exercise or any activity that will significantly alter your core body temperature. During these first few weeks, brisk walking is the best form of exercise; aim to walk 30 – 45 minutes 3-4 times each week.

Pregnancy yoga, Pilates and swimming are all recommended after 12 weeks.

Avoid hot baths – warm baths are OK.

### Sex

Sex is best avoided during the first 12 weeks if you have a history of miscarriage, if your pregnancy has been IVF or ICSI or if you have had any spotting or early pregnancy bleeding.

### Air travel

There is no significant research available to say whether flying is safe or not. However we believe that during the first 12 – 14 weeks it is best to avoid flying.

### Nutrition

Good nutrition and food safety is vital throughout pregnancy and in particular during the first trimester when your baby is developing and when the risk of miscarriage is at its highest.

Principles of Nutrition during the first trimester

- Quality not quantity – you are not eating for two
- Always eat breakfast, aim to eat 3 meals and 3 snacks each day
- Ensure that you are taking folic acid 400 mcg daily as well as a folate rich diet,
- Avoid foods with a high glycaemic index i.e. high sugar foods.
- Eat about 60g of protein daily e.g. chicken breast 27g, 1 cup of porridge oats 10 g, 1cup of kidney beans 15g.
- Each meal should contain both carbohydrate and protein foods. Avoid refined carbohydrates – eat complex carbs.
- Eat organic foods and foods close to their natural state.
- Cut out processed foods, MSG, sulphur dioxide, 'diet' foods and fast food.

- Cut out caffeine (linked to miscarriage).
- Cut out alcohol – there is no known safe limit in pregnancy.
- Eat food rich in antioxidants e.g foods rich in vitamin C, E Beta-carotene, Selenium and Zinc.

We strongly recommend that you take an antenatal multi vitamin and mineral supplement and a DHA supplement throughout the pregnancy. During the first 12 weeks (1st trimester) we recommend Vital Essence 1 and Vital DHA.

*Clients of Zita West Affiliated Acupuncturists can arrange a Nutritional Consultation (at 20% discount) at the Zita West Clinic - 020 7224 0017. Telephone consultations are also available.*

## Safe eating in pregnancy

Cases of food poisoning have rocketed in the last few years, and whilst some pathogens such as salmonella do not cross the placenta and directly affect the foetus, the effect of a high temperature, vomiting and diarrhoea can lead to miscarriage. Other pathogens are known to directly affect the foetus and cause miscarriage.

### **Listeria**

*Listeria* is a bacterium most often found in soft cheeses, unpasteurized milk products, and ready-to-eat or undercooked meat, poultry, bagged salads or seafood. *Listeria* can grow even in refrigerated foods. *Listeria* causes mild to severe flu-like symptoms in pregnant women, who can pass the illness to their unborn child. Infection of the foetus can result in miscarriage, premature birth, blood poisoning and birth defects. *Listeria* can be treated with antibiotics.

*Toxoplasmosis*, a parasite carried by cats, can also contaminate food. Most often, *toxoplasmosis* results from eating undercooked meat and poultry or unwashed fruits and vegetables, from cleaning a litter box, or from handling contaminated soil. *Toxoplasmosis* usually causes no symptoms or only mild flu-like conditions in pregnant women, but can be passed to a developing baby, resulting in miscarriage or disability.

### **Other common causes of food poisoning**

*Campylobacter* from raw/undercooked meat and untreated milk.

*Salmonella* from raw/undercooked meat, poultry and eggs.

*E Coli* from beef, unpasteurised milk and cheese. Symptoms: cramps, vomiting, diarrhoea.

*Chlostridium perfringens*, from poorly heated or left over rice.

*Botulism* from damaged or blown tins.

## Foods to avoid

- Unpasteurised milk. e.g goat's milk
- Uncooked eggs – ideally eggs should be cooked until both the white and yolk are solid.
- Use caution when buying unwrapped foods eg. cooked meat and prepared salads
- Avoid raw fish (sushi) and shell fish eg. Prawns, cockles, mussels unless bought packaged and stamped with a use by date.

- Peanuts and peanut products if there is a family history of allergies such as asthma, eczema or peanut allergy.
- Unwashed fruit, vegetables and salad.
- Liver and liver products such as pate (high levels of Vitamin A).
- Poultry and raw meat – risk of salmonella , safe only if cooked well done.
- ‘Big’ fish such as Shark, Sword fish and Marlin as a high level of mercury can damage the developing nervous system of an unborn baby.
- Oily fish - no more than twice a week: mackerel, herring, salmon (organic or wild) or sardines.
- Limit the amount of tuna that you eat. You should eat no more than two medium sized cans (drained weight = 140 gm per can), or one fresh tuna steak per week.
- Soft whipped ice cream from cream machines and vans
- Ripened soft cheese: Brie, Cambozola, Camembert, Chaumes, Lymeswold, Pont L’Eveque, Tallegio.
- Soft unpasteurised goat’s and sheep’s cheese, feta.
- Blue veined Cheese: Bavarian Blue, Blue Brie, Blue Shropshire, Danish Blue, Dolcelatte, Gorgonzola, Roquefort, Stilton, Stilton spread cheese.

## Foods safe to eat

- Hard cheeses: Austrian smoked, Babybel, Caerphilly, Cheddar, Chesire, Derby, Edam, Emmenthal, English Goat’s Cheddar, Gloucester, Gouda, Gruyere, Halloumi, Havarti, Jarlsberg, Lancashire, Leicester, Paneer, Parmesan, Pecorino(hard), Port Salute, Wensleydale.
- Soft and Processed Cheeses: Cottage, Spread, processed cream and processed cheeses, Boursin, Mascarpone, Philadelphia, Quark, Ricotta, pasteurized mozzarella.
- Shop bought mayonnaise and salad creams which contain pasteurized eggs.
- Yogurts – any kind but organic low sugar ‘bio’ is best.

## First trimester plan

- You need to consider where and how you want to have your baby i.e NHS, private or home birth. Consider the options of care available; your midwife can assist and advice you with these decisions.
- Inform your GP so that he can arrange an NHS referral.
- Screening blood tests and ultrasound scans are usually carried out at 12/13 weeks so ensure that you receive your appointments before this time.
- Recommended Pregnancy Reference Books: Baby Care before Birth by Zita West, Birth and Beyond by Yehudi Gordon, Bonding with your Bump by Dr Miriam Stoppard.



## Acupuncture in pregnancy

Acupuncture can play a major role in helping you to achieve peak physical, mental and emotional health and well-being throughout your pregnancy. It can be particularly beneficial in preventing or resolving many of the minor ailments and medical conditions of pregnancy such as nausea, sickness, backache, pelvic pain, stress, fatigue as well

as helping your body and mind prepare for birth and motherhood. It is recommended that where possible you consider having regular acupuncture treatment throughout your pregnancy. You can discuss timing and frequency of treatments with your acupuncturist.