

Advanced Maternal Age: Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

Advanced maternal age is the medical term for pregnancy in a woman who will be 35 or older on her due date. Most women this age have healthy babies. But a pregnancy at this age has a greater risk for problems than a pregnancy at a younger age. These include preterm birth and preeclampsia. They also include gestational diabetes, problems with the placenta, and genetic problems.

Most of these problems can't be prevented. But it's best to catch any problems early. This is why your doctor will want to check you for diabetes. He or she will also check your blood pressure and urine at every visit. High blood pressure and protein in urine are signs of preeclampsia.

You can decide if you want to have tests to find out if your fetus has certain genetic problems, such as Down syndrome. A fetus is the medical term for a baby before birth.

There are many things you can't control about pregnancy. But there is a lot you can do to help you have a healthy pregnancy. Do your best to eat well. And try to get plenty of exercise and rest.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Talk with your doctor about prenatal screening tests. These can help find Down syndrome and other possible problems.
- Eat a balanced diet with plenty of protein, calcium, and iron. Be sure to include fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Talk to your doctor about an exercise plan. Many pregnant women enjoy walking, swimming, and prenatal yoga.
- Make sure that you get enough folic acid. Folic acid helps prevent some birth defects, especially if you take it before you get pregnant. Your doctor will tell you how much you need. You can take folic acid pills.
- Take your prenatal vitamins.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydration can lead to contractions. If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you take any over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal supplements, or home remedies.
- Do not drink alcohol. No amount of alcohol has been found to be safe during pregnancy.
- Do not smoke. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.

When should you call for help?



Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://kp.org/health>

Enter **C333** in the search box to learn more about "**Advanced Maternal Age: Care Instructions**".

Current as of: February 11, 2020