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TO OUR OBSTETRICAL PATIENTS

Congratulations on your pregnancy! Thank you for entrusting us with this precious event in your lives. This letter is to provide you with guidance on how you will receive care during your pregnancy and to answer frequently answered questions. **First and foremost, please check our regularly updated website (www.drunitalal.ca) and office waiting room bulletin board.**

We (Dr. Lal and Michelle) will be seeing you at our office (located at 304-1580 Merivale Road) according to the following appointment schedule:

- Until 28 weeks, you will be seen approximately every 4 weeks by Dr. Lal or your family physician
- From 28 to 36 weeks, you will be seen approximately every 2 weeks
- From 37 weeks to delivery, you will be seen weekly
- At 6 weeks, a postpartum visit with your family physician (if you had a vaginal delivery) or with Dr. Lal (if you had a C-section). Please phone to book this after your hospital discharge.

During your pregnancy, you can expect the following appointments and tests:

- Weight, blood pressure and possibly urine are checked at each visit.
- Please wear a shirt with sleeves that can be easily pushed above your elbow (to facilitate accurate blood pressure measurements).
- At your first visit, a focused history and physical exam as well as prenatal blood work (if not already done by your referring physician).
- Prior to 16 weeks, an offer of genetic testing of the fetus for Down's syndrome, spina bifida and other chromosomal abnormalities.
- At 20 weeks, a routine obstetrical ultrasound; other ultrasounds may be ordered when clinically indicated.
- At 24-28 weeks, a screening test for gestational diabetes will be done.
- If you are Rh negative blood type, you should receive a call from QCH by 28 weeks to arrange for Rhogam. Please call 613-721-4816 if you don't receive an appointment.
- Between 35 and 37 weeks, a vaginal swab is collected to test for Group B Streptococcus.
- At 40 weeks, a pelvic exam may be done to check cervical dilation.
- Between 40 and 41 weeks, an obstetrical ultrasound to ensure wellbeing of the fetus.
- In an uncomplicated pregnancy, induction of labour is planned for approximately 7-10 days after your due date (41+0 to 41+3)
- Should you develop any complications during your pregnancy, the frequency of your appointments or tests may be altered to more closely follow you and your baby.

Please ensure that you complete the Queensway Carleton Hospital Preregistration Form online (registration.qch.on.ca) as soon as possible after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Common concerns during pregnancy:

- For nausea and vomiting in early pregnancy, try eating soda crackers before getting out of bed, eating smaller meals and avoiding food/smells that make you nauseated. The Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy (NVP) Helpline (1-800-436-8477) is an excellent resource for lifestyle modifications to improve nausea. Diclectin can be prescribed if necessary.
- If you have a “stomach bug”, use Gravol. Drink fluids. If more than 2 days please call QCH Mother Baby Unit (613-721-4700 x2127)
- For constipation, eat foods rich in fibre such as fruits, raw vegetables, whole grain cereals. Drink plenty of water and get regular exercise. If necessary, you may take Polyethylene Glycol 3350 (Restoralax)
- Vaccinations are recommended in pregnancy: flu shot, COVID booster and TDAP (at 27-32 weeks). These are available via Ottawa Public Health, your family doctor or local drugstore.
- For heartburn, eat more frequent but smaller meals. Don’t recline soon after meals. Wear loose clothing around your abdomen. If necessary, try an antacid such as Tums.
- For colds or mild headaches, you may safely take acetaminophen (Tylenol) and Robitussin DM or saline nasal spray.
- For environmental allergies, use cetirizine (Reactine) after the first trimester.
- For hemorrhoids, try Anusol or Tucks pads as needed.
- For backaches, try using multiple pillows for sleep, using a hot water bottle (not on your abdomen) or having a massage/physiotherapy. Massage and physiotherapy is covered under many insurance plans.
- Please do your bloodwork at Dynacare or Lifelabs. The results are directly linked to our office for faster turnaround.
- Dr. Lal shares “on call” with a group of obstetricians at the Queensway-Carleton Hospital. They are Drs. Lucyna Anderson, Nasser Beshara, Doug Cochen, Nadine Doris, Chris Farrell, Kelly Goodwin, Paul Legault, Allison McKinnon, Lynn Shepherd and Susan Thorne.

Recommended readings:

- *Healthy Beginnings* by Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (order by phone at 1-877-519-7999 or online at www.sogc.org/healthybeginnings)
- *What to Expect When You Are Expecting* by A. Eisenberg
- Queensway Carleton Hospital Website: www.qch.on.ca, click on “Childbirth Program” on the home page.