

## **Third Trimester (28 weeks – term)**

### **After 28 weeks:**

- A fetal kick count form is included to be used if your physician requests this of you.
- Take a tour of the hospital, Good Samaritan, and turn in the registration form. You can also FAX the registration form to the hospital admissions department (559-2691) or turn it in to your nurse at Los Olivos. Please keep a copy of the completed form.
- Choose a pediatrician. Our community is fortunate to have excellent pediatricians. Ask your friends or your physician for recommendations. The pediatrician is the person with whom to discuss nursing, formula, and circumcision. If you wish to interview pediatricians, this should be done early in the third trimester. A list of some of the community pediatricians is included.
- Make sure that Los Olivos and the hospital both have your correct insurance information. If you have any financial obligations to Los Olivos, these should be finalized by 26 weeks of your pregnancy.

### **Examinations:**

- Your physician may check your cervix for dilation and/or softening during the last month of your pregnancy. A vaginal culture for beta-streptococcus is usually taken.
- You will be monitored for pre-eclampsia (Toxemia or pregnancy-induced-hypertension PIH) during the third trimester. Signs of pre-eclampsia include: increased blood pressure, right upper quadrant abdominal pain, protein in your urine, severe headaches, significant swelling of your hands, feet or face.

### **Signs of labor:**

- Contractions – during the last weeks of pregnancy, you may experience uterine contractions. These Braxton-Hicks contractions serve as warm-up exercises for the uterine muscle. Labor contractions are different. They are more regular in timing and stronger in intensity, frequency and duration. Labor contractions do not go away when you lie down or rest.
- Rupture of membranes – Either a gush of fluid or a slow leaking of fluid may occur when the amniotic sack ruptures. This occurs before labor begins about 15% of the time. The fluid is usually clear and odorless.
- Bloody show – A small amount of bleeding is commonly seen after an exam in the office or just prior to the onset of labor. This may or may not contain the mucous plug. Unfortunately, neither the passage of blood nor the mucous plug will predict when labor will begin. It is not necessary to call the doctor if you have bloody show or lose your mucous plug.

### **Birth plans:**

Most patients attend prenatal classes. After you complete your classes, ask your nurse or doctor about any questions that arise. The philosophy of the physicians at Los Olivos is one of non-intervention in low risk pregnancies. Pain medications and anesthesia are usually available if requested. A written birth plan is not necessary. Please see “At the hospital”.

## **Third Trimester (29-40 weeks)**

### **What is happening to me?**

You may be experiencing:

- Abdominal pains/Braxton-Hicks contractions
- Shortness of breath
- Stronger fetal activity/larger movements
- Difficulty sleeping
- Swelling of hands, feet
- Itchy abdomen
- Frequent urination
- Colostrum/leaking breasts
- Increasing back and leg aches
- Hemorrhoids
- Increased vaginal discharge
- Navel sticking out
- Cervix changes

### **What is happening to my baby?**

7th month (29-32 weeks):

- This is a period of extreme growth and maturation for your baby
- By the end of this month fat begins to deposit on your baby
- Your baby can suck its thumb, hiccup, cry, and can taste sweet or sour
- He/She can respond to stimuli (pain, light and sound)
- The placental functions begin to diminish
- The volume of amniotic fluid lessens
- Your baby is about 14 inches long
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8th month (32-36 weeks):

- Your baby is starting to see and hear as the brain matures
- Excluding the lungs, most systems are well-developed
- By the end of this month, your baby is about 18 inches long and weighs about 5 pounds

9th month (37-40 weeks):

- The lungs are maturing this month
- The baby adds about ½ pound growth per week
- Your baby may weigh nearly 7 pounds and be about 18-20 inches
- He/She kicks and stretches as it gets bigger and there is less room
- Fine body hair disappears
- Bones harden, but bones of the head are soft and flexible for delivery
- The fetus settles into a position for birth
- Full term: approximately 20 inches long and six to nine pounds.