



The University of the Philippines Manila

The Health Sciences Center

COLLEGE OF NURSING

WHO Collaborating Center for Leadership in Nursing Development

Commission on Higher Education Center of Excellence

Sotejo Hall, Pedro Gil St., Ermita, Manila 1000



Pregnancy Myths and Discomforts

1. Interview a pregnant woman or any woman who has been pregnant (face-to-face, if possible, or via Messenger, Text, Call, etc.). Ask her what discomforts did she feel during her entire pregnancy. List the discomforts she identified and examine if she did it right and what intervention could've been a better way of managing her discomfort.

| Pregnancy discomfort | Own Management | Proper Management |
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| 1. Frequent Urination | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• None | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kegel Exercise as this may help strengthen urinary control, perineal muscles, and it decreases the possibility of stress incontinence. |
| 2. Backache | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stretching with exercise ball | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application of local heat. |
| 3. Braxton Hicks Contractions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• None | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resting because these contractions are usually painless. |
| 4. Numbness in Hands | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Squeezing rubber ball | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be a manifestation of oedema expected in pregnancy. |

2. Interview your mother or grandmother (whoever is available) and ask them about pregnancy myths. List all that they can identify? If one of your future clients will raise this concern, how/what answer will you give them?

| Pregnancy Myth | Truth |
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| 1. "An aswang would visit me because I am pregnant and they like the smell of it." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have heard of this myth as well and based on my knowledge, they are used to explain stillbirths and miscarriages. However, based on medical findings and research, stillbirths and miscarriages are caused by complications in pregnancies or other health conditions. The most likely causes are: problems with the placenta or umbilical cord, preeclampsia, lupus, maternal medical conditions, poor lifestyle choices (e.g. use of alcohol, cigarettes, or recreational drugs), birth defects, infection, trauma or obstetric cholestasis. |
| 2. "If I read a lot of books, my baby will love reading books and be smart." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading books to your baby is stimulating and it is one way to bond deeply with your baby. In terms of being smart, there are multiple factors that may influence this. |
| 3. "I should not wear a necklace or wrap a towel around my neck because the umbilical cord might wrap around the baby's neck." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A nuchal cord occurs because of the baby's movement inside the uterus. Though, it will not harm them if it is not tightly wrapped around them, it is essential to attend health check-ups as frequently as possible to detect any complications earlier and manage them efficiently. |
| 4. "I should not go to funerals and/or the cemetery because my baby might be taken away by vengeful spirits." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Though miscarriages are not caused by attending a funeral, being in an emotionally stressful situation can influence this. This is because stress |

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| | <p>releases a certain chemical in the body (cortisol). An elevated cortisol levels increases the risk for early miscarriage. This is because cortisol may also be secreted by the placenta, altering the fetal metabolism. Additionally, stress can increase blood pressure which increases the risk for preeclampsia.</p> |
| 5. "I should not eat dark coloured foods because it might affect how my baby looks." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating dark coloured foods will not affect the physical appearance of the baby. Instead, it is the parental genes that will affect how the baby will look. |
| 6. "I should step over my husband if I want him to feel what pregnancy is like." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the present technological advancements, there are now devices that can simulate pregnancy/labour for men. |
| 7. "No one should eat a pregnant woman's food because the person might become sleepy." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating someone else's food can transfer possible health diseases between the two people. And, if the person sharing food with the pregnant woman is infected with a disease, they may potentially endanger both the mother and the baby. |
| 8. "I should not sew because the baby's butt might close." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth defects are usually caused by chromosomal problems, exposure to harmful environmental agents, infections, and genetic problems. This can be prevented with adherence to prenatal care to screen and manage potential complications to pregnancy. |

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| <p>9. "I should eat a lot because I am eating for two people now."</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Though it is important to ensure that the baby is receiving adequate nutrients to cater foetal developmental needs, regulating weight gain is vital in ensuring a healthy pregnancy. Too much weight gain can predispose both the mother and the baby to undesirable health conditions such as gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, increased risk for varicose veins and haemorrhoids. |
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