

Physical Activity for Pregnant Women

By Joe Kotsch, Perinatal Consultant

A recent study in the journal *Preventive Medicine*, discusses national trends in self-reported data on physical activity and sedentary behaviors in pregnant women. Two groups of pregnant women were compared. One group was pregnant women who responded to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) from 1999-2002 and the other group was pregnant women who were respondents to the NHANES study from 2003-2006.

The researchers discovered that moderate to vigorous household activities and moderate leisure activities among pregnant women increased from 1999-2002 to 2003-2006. This occurred while those who met the recommendations for physical activity remained otherwise stable. The current guidelines for exercise during pregnancy recommended by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) set forth in 2002 recommends 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise a day on most to all days of the week. This is true as long as there are no medical or obstetrical complications.

This study is thought to broaden previous studies on physical activities by inclusion of a gestational age question and asking questions regarding physical activities and leisure behaviors while women are currently pregnant and not relying on distant memory recall.

While this seems an important find, it is still imperative to encourage pregnant women who have no contraindications to exercise at a moderate level for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week or more often. It is also a good time to emphasize a heart healthy diet, education on the benefits of breastfeeding, avoidance of alcohol during the childbearing years due to the risk of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), stopping the use of tobacco products and teaching women the signs and symptoms of premature labor, hemorrhage, hypertension and deep vein thrombosis (blood clots.)

The documentation for this study is:

Evenson K, Wen F. 2010. National trends in self-reported physical activity and sedentary behaviors among pregnant women: NHANES 1999-2006. *Preventive Medicine* 50(3):123-128.

VAMPSS Focuses On Medications And Vaccines During Pregnancy

By Joe Kotsch, Perinatal Consultant



The Vaccines and Medications in Pregnancy Surveillance System (VAMPSS) is a new nationwide surveillance system that is designed to monitor the use and safety of vaccines and medications during pregnancy. The system, coordinated by the American Academy of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology (AAAAI), includes an investigative task force (ITF) and a standing independent advisory committee (IAC).

The ITF includes representatives from AAAAI, the Organization of Teratology Information Specialists and the Slone Epidemiology Center at Boston University. The system involves both prospective registry surveillance and case-control surveillance. Information is collected directly from participating mothers about over-the-counter medications, dietary supplements and products acquired outside of traditional medical settings.

VAMPSS evaluates the risk or safety of pregnancy exposures with respect to spontaneous abortions, preeclampsia, fetal deaths, preterm births, intrauterine growth restriction, total major congenital malformations and specific major malformations. Target vaccines and medications for the initial effort include seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccines, antiviral medications used to treat or prevent the flu in pregnancy and asthma medications used in pregnancy.

For more information on how VAMPSS will be used and how clinicians can help support the system is available at www.otispregnancy.org/vaccines-and-medications-in-pregnancy-surveillance-system-s13053.

March for Babies®

By Jamie Klenklen, MCH Admin Consultant



Do you want to make a difference? Sign up to walk in the March of Dimes® March for Babies® event in your area at www.marchforbabies.org/.

Here is a list of the upcoming events:

April 11 – Kansas State University Union, Manhattan, registration begins at 1 p.m.

April 17 – Lawrence Dumont Stadium, Wichita, registration begins at 9 a.m.

April 23 – Topeka Zoological Park, Topeka, registration begins at 5 p.m.

April 24 – South Park, Lawrence, registration begins at 9 a.m.

May 1 - Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, registration begins at 9 a.m.

May 9 – Jerry Ivey Park, Salina, registration begins at 1 p.m.