Pregnancy, Nutrition & Digestive Enzymes

There are very few times in a woman's life when nutrition is as important as when she is pregnant. During that period of gestation, both mother and the developing fetus have to acquire the proper nutrients to sustain health and promote proper growth and development of the baby. The nutritional demands for new bones, tissue, organs and blood formation are significant. Additionally, the quality and quantity of nutrients are equally important. This requires healthy food selection, optimum digestion, good absorption processes, and adequate elimination of wastes.

The nutritional status of the mother, even before embryonic development, can have significant influences on the fetus. For instance, the mother supports the fertilized egg with the nutrients she had stored in the egg prior to conception. After conception, the fertilized egg moves down the uterus and implants itself on the uterine wall. This forms the placenta, and the egg now derives its nutrients from the mother's blood. The challenge placed on the mother is to maintain an adequate supply of those nutrients and also to minimize the presence of any toxic materials.

The biological development of the baby is a very delicate process and can be susceptible to variations in gene regulation. It is during the first 6 weeks of development that the formation of the digestive system begins, and it is not until 6 months or more after birth when a fully functioning digestive system is complete. Different nutrients affect the expression of the various genes that are needed for proper development and vitality. Some genes need to be turned off whereas other genes need to be turned on. In many cases if the opportunity for specific gene expression is missed, it is lost and cannot be corrected. The fact that gene regulation is controlled by nutrients and environmental factors emphasizes the critical need for adequate nutrition, digestion, and elimination of wastes.

When considering the nutritional needs during pregnancy, the overall goal is for the mother to give birth to a healthy, normal weight baby while remaining healthy herself. Calorie and nutrient needs will vary from individual to individual depending on variables such as physical activity, age and size. The Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council provides the general recommendations for calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals to promote a healthy pregnancy. Please consult with your health care professional for your individual needs.

In order to ensure proper nutrient acquisition from mother to baby, the mother's digestive system and circulatory system must be functioning properly. Assuming that the mother is ingesting nutrient dense foods, the digestive process and circulatory system is essential for delivering the nutritional benefit. Proper growth, adequate development, and even future wellness into adulthood will depend on the early nutrient acquisition process of mother and baby. Unfortunately, more often than not proper digestion is not given adequate attention.

Contrary to common belief, the digestive system is less than perfect in most people. This is due to poor food choices, lifestyle (stress), genetics and environmental influences. Fortunately, supplemental enzymes are available which are very safe and effective. These digestive enzymes can be taken orally with meals to promote the bioavailability of nutrients from the diet. Supplemental enzymes known as proteases may be taken between meals for systemic benefits such as improved circulation and assistance with detoxification. Additionally, the use of probiotics, friendly bacteria, can further support optimal digestion and elimination of wastes. Many practitioners have safely and successfully used Transformation's digestive enzymes and probiotics with pregnant and nursing clients for over 30 years. The end result is the promotion of a healthy pregnancy for both mother and child.