



What is Prenatal Nursing?

Prenatal nursing is a specific type of medical care that is recommended for pregnant mothers to ensure a healthy pregnancy. Reason being, it helps identify potential problems that may occur during and after a mother's pregnancy (Canadian Nurses Association



[CNA], 2005b). As a result, the mother can ensure a healthier lifestyle for herself and unborn infant throughout her pregnancy (CNA, 2005b). Therefore,

prenatal nursing is an amazing support for pregnant mothers; thus infants. However, the essence of prenatal nursing goes beyond this brief introduction. So please read on for a more in depth view of prenatal nursing.

Preparation during pregnancy. Link : <http://www.medcost.com/prenatal/beforepregnancyo.htm>

Uniqueness of a Prenatal Nurse

The Unique Essence of Prenatal Nursing
Prenatal nurses, also known as primary caregivers, work closely with women and their families before, during, and after their pregnancy. This specialty of nursing is unique because it provides women with a more personal form of caring than they would receive at a clinic (CNA, 2005a, p. 5). Further, this type of personal care is offered through hospital, community and or home visits. (CNA, 2005a, p. 5)

Additional Unique Roles

As mentioned, prenatal nurses provide care in the hospital and at the home. However, prenatal nursing is also a helpful parenting resource for various other reasons. For example, prenatal nurses help



mothers by offering breast feeding programs (CNA, 2005a, p. 5). Second, they work in local schools to provide care for young children (CNA, 2005a, p. 5). Third, they teach parents effective parenting skills (CNAa, 2005, p. 5). Finally, they help clients find community resources that meet their culture needs (CNA, 2005a, p. 5).

Communication: A Unique Prenatal Nursing Skills

Prenatal nurses need to have good communication skills. Reason being, they advocate for early childhood development and work one on one with families in the community (CNA, 2005a, p. 4). In addition, they need to communicate information to their patients so that informed choices can be made (CNA, 2005a, p. 4). Finally, emotional and physical support is important in the prenatal nurse-patient relationship. Therefore, prenatal nurses need to know how to read their patients verbal and non verbal cues. In doing so, they can provide proper care. (Association of Ontario midwives, n.d. b)

Goals & Outcomes

The goal of prenatal nursing is to prevent or reduce the chance of a troubled maternal life course (Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 646). To accomplish this goal, prenatal nurses educate and support mothers and fathers during

and after the course of their pregnancy. As a result, parents avoid pregnancy related stress and health issues (Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 646). Moreover, they feel a sense of empowered to begin parenthood on the right track.

Goals & Outcomes During Pregnancy

- Prevent pregnancy-induced hypertension
- Prevent premature birth
- Prevent low birth rate
- Support for low-income and first time mothers
- Prevent or reduce pregnancy related stress
- Educating the mother/parent(s) about pregnancy related matters
 - Regarding proper pregnancy nutrition
 - Regarding maternal health related behaviours during pregnancy (i.e. not smoking, drinking alcohol, or being subjected to violence)
 - Regarding infant/child abuse and neglect

(Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 644)

- Conduct exams
- Conduct home visits to:
 - Observe the mothers environment and lifestyle
 - Ensure suitable conditions for development of the baby while in the womb

Goals & Outcomes After Pregnancy

- Prevent injury to infant/child
- Prevent ingestion
- Maintain up-to-date immunization records
- Assist with behavioural problems
- Assist mother with potential mental health issues (i.e. postpartum depression)
- Assist mother with infant or child related developmental or mental health issues
- Prevention of undesired subsequent pregnancy
- Provide ingoing support and care for parent(s) following the birth
- Prevent or reduce post-pregnancy related stress (i.e. financial, breastfeeding, and sleep related stress)

(Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 644)

Who May Benefit from Prenatal Nursing

Prenatal nursing is beneficial resource to all parents; even the experts. However, it is especially beneficial to those in the following scenarios. Reason being, they have an increased risk of experiencing stress due to additional life stressors (Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 646).

- Single mothers
- First-time mothers/parents
- Low-income mothers/parents
- Adolescent mothers/parents
- Sick mothers/parents (i.e. illness, disease, mental health issues, or addictions)

(Kitzman et al., 1997, p. 644)

- Parents with special needs children
- Parents with over or under weight infants or children who are over/under weight

(Canadian nurses association, 2005, p. 5)



Community Resources

Durham Region Events and Seminars

The [Durham Region](#)

This website is a great resource to look up local information regarding community events and seminars.

Rose of Durham

Mission Statement

"To work with young parents in Durham Region by providing supportive programming so they may build a better future for themselves and for their children" (Rose of Durham, 2009).



Programs Offered

Prenatal Classes

School Program

Provides a supportive and accepting environment for young mothers that are still partaking in a high school education (Rose of Durham, 2009).

Importance of DADs Program

This program is unique just for Dad's because it promotes healthy relationships and parenting skills for new fathers (Rose of Durham, 2009).

SickKids Hospital



SickKids Hospital offers in depth information about prenatal care. In particular, the MOTHERISK program provides information about pre pregnancy vitamins, nutritional guidelines, and up to date information about the latest research in prenatal care.

Information & Resources Offered

[Morning Sickness](#)
[Breastfeeding and Drugs](#)
[Folic Acid](#)
[Cancer in Pregnancy](#)
[Conditions in Pregnancy](#)
[Alcohol, Nicotine, and Substance Use](#)
(SickKids, 2009)

Additional Information

Motherisk also offers a wealth on information from external sources that can help expecting Mothers (SickKids, 2009).

Outside Sources Include

- Pregnancy, Nutrition and Exercise
- General Pregnancy and Parenting
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- National Centers and Associations

(SickKids, 2009)

Click [here](#) for more information

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Picture 1. Retrieved from http://images.google.ca/imgres?imgurl=http://www.babytalk.org/images/prenatal-belly.gif&imgrefurl=http://www.babytalk.org/program/prenatal.htm&usq=__VtNZLxVDEIoxcigeM0INxPKcG9g=&h=230&w=202&sz=32&hl=en&start=12&um=1&tbnid=klKSTem-HIL0IM:&tbnh=108&tbnw=95&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dprenatal%26hl%3Den%26um%3D1

Picture 2. Retrieved from http://www.lovemarks.com/media/image/anne_geddes.html.jpg

Picture 3. Retrieved from http://www.tchd.org/expectant_new_moms.htm