





Ambivalence in Pregnancy

Presented By:

Katherine L. Dreyer, RN, CNM

Physiologic Changes in Pregnancy

- Presumptive Signs: changes that the woman notices in her body that prompt her to check to see if she is pregnant
 - Nausea
 - Skipping a period
 - Fatigue
 - Breast tenderness

Physiologic Changes in Pregnancy

- Probable Signs
 - Positive Pregnancy test
 - Chadwick's sign, Hegar's sign, Goodell's (all seen on physical exam)
- Positive Signs
 - Fetal Heart Rate
 - Ultrasound showing a viable fetus

Common Discomforts in Early Pregnancy

- Nausea, with or without vomiting
- Fatigue
- Upper backache
- Leukorrhea: profuse, thin/thick vaginal discharge
- Urinary frequency
- Nocturia
- Insomnia

Psychosocial Aspects of Early Pregnancy

- Ambivalence: meaning of the word and how it presents in pregnancy
- Motherhood journey

How Can We Address It?

- Beyond asking how the woman feels about the pregnancy, it is important to talk about the ambivalence.
- Acknowledging that ambivalence exists is the first step.

How Can We Address It?

- I frequently tell a woman that some women might feel happy one day and scared and unhappy the next.
- Then I explain that this is a common reaction among women in the first trimester. I also explain that feelings of unhappiness to being pregnant does not communicate to the growing baby.

How Can We Address It?

- Important to remember that how they feel about being pregnant fluctuates with other physical symptoms.
- I try to reassure them that the feelings are very normal and not abnormal.

Further Thoughts and Suggestions

- Since ambivalence can be related to their relationship with their own mothers, it is important to assess whether or not further counseling might be advised.
- Suggesting parenting classes can also support the woman by equipping her with sensible options in how to parent.

Further Thoughts and Suggestions

- Involving fathers in the discussion can help as well. If the father is not in favor of the pregnancy, we all know that can effect the woman's feelings. Explaining when the man develops into the father (much later in pregnancy) can help both of the couple discuss the issue.

A teal speech bubble with a white question mark inside, set against a light blue gradient background.

Questions?



Kathy Dreyer, RN, CNM
nm@journeyclinic.org