

Identifying Exposures: Incorporating Prenatal Environmental Health Assessments



CHE FERTILITY
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Typical Prenatal Environmental Health Assessment



- Occupation
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- Medications
- Vitamins/herbal supplements



Why aren't we asking more?



- Don't know what to ask
- Don't know how to answer patient questions
- Don't know what to do if an exposure is found
- Don't want to scare patients
- Afraid it will take too much time
- But...

Why aren't we asking more?



- This is the perfect teachable moment
- Patients are requesting this information
- Exposures during pregnancy can have life-long health impacts
- The changes will have positive impacts long past pregnancy




Assessment Tool Development



- Common sources of exposure
- Research showing reproductive and other health risks
- Patients have the ability to reduce exposures
- Length of assessment
- Ability of patients to answer questions
- Provide education/anticipatory guidance within the tool

Prenatal Assessment Tool



	Question	Yes	No	?
	Do you use pesticides (chemicals used to kill insects, rodents, weeds):			
	In your home?			
	In your yard?			
	On your pets? This includes flea collars, dips, once-a-month products			
	At your workplace?			
	If yes, what:			


Prenatal Assessment Tool



Why do we ask this question?	Steps to Reduce Risks
<p>Many chemicals in pesticides are suspected of being harmful to the fetus. They may also cause health problems in infants, children, and even adults. There are alternatives to using pesticides, such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is being used in many workplaces and homes. This method of pest control works to reduce pests through a variety of methods so that fewer pesticides need to be used</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminate items that attract pests. Keep surfaces clean of food residues, keep food in containers or in the fridge, & keep trash contained.• Use less toxic methods of pest control such as sticky traps & boric acid.• Take off you shoes when you enter the house to avoid tracking in pesticides, lead, and other toxins through the house.

Prenatal Assessment Tool



	Question	Yes	No	?
	Do you come in contact with chemicals at home or where you work such as cleaning supplies, medications, or other chemicals?			
	If yes, what:			
	Do you use air fresheners, plug-ins, or incense?			
	Do you use strong smelling/fragrant personal care products, such as perfume, deodorant, nail polishes?			


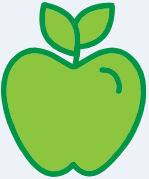
Prenatal Assessment Tool



Why do we ask this question?	Steps to Reduce Risks
<p>Some chemicals require special handling or may not be safe to use while pregnant.</p> <p>Products that have strong scents or fragrance as an ingredient may contain chemicals that have been linked with negative health effects, such as cancer & infertility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice safe handling techniques if using chemicals in the workplace and discuss with your health care provider if they need to be avoided during pregnancy.• Use natural or green cleaners if possible and wear gloves when cleaning to avoid getting cleaners on your skin.• Minimize use of air fresheners and incense.• Decrease the number of personal care products you use. Avoid strong smelling personal care products & purchase fragrance-free if possible.

Prenatal Assessment Tool



	Question	Yes	No	?
	Do you eat fish?			
	If yes, how often:			
	What kind(s):			
	Do you eat fresh fruits & vegetables?			
	If yes, how often:			
	Do you eat locally grown or organic produce?			
	If yes, how often:			

Prenatal Assessment Tool



Why do we ask this question?	Steps to Reduce Risks
<p>Fish is a great food to eat while pregnant. However, some fish contain higher levels of mercury and need to be avoided by pregnant women, toddlers, and children. Do not eat shark, swordfish, king mackerel, or tilefish as they have high levels of mercury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most fish contain some mercury. Usually, the larger the fish the more mercury they contain. Fish with low levels of mercury include shrimp, pollock, tilapia, & salmon.• Avoid albacore tuna while pregnant & only eat 1-2 cans of chunk light tuna per week.
<p>Fresh fruits & vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Produce grown organically is grown without the use of pesticides. Locally grown produce may be grown with fewer pesticides even if it is not labeled organic.</p>	<p>Try to buy organic: apples, bell peppers, celery, spinach, peaches, nectarines, kale, grapes, potatoes, cherries, blueberries & strawberries.</p>

Topics Assessed



Lead

Mercury

Organic Foods

Carbon Monoxide

Plastics

Fish

Second Hand Smoke

Radon

Cosmetics

Cleaning Products

Renovations

Water Quality

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ANHE

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Video: Why Should Nurses Care

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Where do we go from here?



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