



Healthier Moms & Babies
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Healthier Moms & Babies



Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2009

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"Better babies
one baby at a time"

HMB MAKES PERSONAL INSPIRATION AWARDS AVAILABLE

In response to feedback from the Inspiration Award presented at our fundraising luncheon last year, Healthier Moms and Babies will now offer our supporters the opportunity to honor anyone with a personal Inspiration Award. With Mother's Day approaching on May 10, Inspiration Awards could be just the thing for the woman who "has everything"!

Here's how it works. The person presenting the award makes a donation to Healthier Moms and Babies, and requests the Inspiration Award card. The donor can request that the card be sent directly to the honoree with a designated signature, or our staff can send the card to the donors, so that they can sign it themselves and add a note.

The Inspiration Award cards are perfect for not just for Mother's Day, but also birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions. Proceeds from the Inspiration Award Cards will be used for direct services to the pregnant women and new mothers we serve.

The card was designed by Advisory Board member Meg Distler, and her daughter, Mary. An order form is available on Page 3 of this newsletter, and will be available at www.healthiermomsandbabies.org.

The first Healthier Moms and Babies Inspiration Award was given to Marganelle Henry, mother of Mayor Tom Henry, at last year's luncheon (photo on right). An Inspiration Award will be bestowed upon a guest of honor at the 2009 fundraising event later this year.



The event committee is planning "something big", which will be detailed in our June newsletter.

Card front



Inside of card



Inside reads: "In your honor, a donation has been made to Healthier Moms and Babies, a non-profit agency that helps low-income, high-risk pregnant women deliver healthy babies and become the best mothers they can be to their children."

Please consider honoring your loved ones and supporting Healthier Moms and Babies at the same time.

You may contact us by phone at 260-425-3348, or you may email us at info@healthiermomsandbabies.org if you have any questions about this project. You may use the order form on Page 3, or you can order online at our website. Thanks to Meg and Mary for their help in this endeavor.

He Will Be Missed ...

Healthier Moms and Babies lost a great volunteer with the passing of Gary Boston in February. Gary and his wife, Barbara, have been a part of the team that folds, stuffs, labels and sorts this newsletter since not long after we began sending newsletters. Gary usually sorted by zip code, and gave us some good ideas about streamlining our system. To Barbara, their children and grandchildren, Healthier Moms and Babies extends our sincere sympathy. Rest in peace, Gary. We'll miss you as this newsletter goes out without your able assistance.



Health Corner - continued from page 2

Patients with preeclampsia will usually notice that the edema that used to be confined to the feet is now creeping up to the face and hands. Patients often retain five to ten pounds of fluid in less than a week. Headaches are common as are visual disturbances and unexplained nausea. More severe cases may experience upper abdominal pain as the capsule of the liver begins to swell. One out of a hundred patients with preeclampsia will develop grand mal seizures because of hypertension and the swelling of the brain. This is referred to as eclampsia. This complication occurs about five times a year in Fort Wayne. This is considered an obstetric emergency and requires urgent delivery of the neonate. Fortunately, patients usually recover and remain seizure-free.

What are the consequences for both mother and baby if the hypertension is not treated and/or controlled?

Uncontrolled severe hypertension could cause a mother to have a stroke. If the blood pressure is too high for the heart to handle, fluid may back up in to the lungs causing pulmonary edema. There is also evidence that long term kidney disease is linked to poorly controlled hypertension during pregnancy.

For the fetus, the outcome is more predictable. Hypertension is associated with impaired placental blood flow. This results in fetal growth impairment as well as the shunting of blood to one organ system at the expense of another. If the hypertension is unchecked, the entire placenta may separate resulting in a placental abruption. Outcomes are poor under these circumstances and may result in fetal demise.

The decision for the timing of delivery sometimes pits maternal interests against those of the fetus. It is unusual for a fetus to flourish when a mother has severe preeclampsia. So, the decision to deliver a baby several weeks before it's due may still offer the best options for both parties.

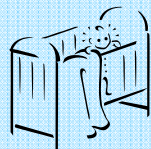
Thanks, Dr. Wheeler! Readers, please let us know if this article prompted a pregnant woman to have her symptoms checked by emailing us at info@healthiermomsandbabies.org.

Also let us know if there is a pregnancy or infancy related subject you'd like us to cover in our Health Corner.

Footprints Design & Layout Editor: K. Failor, CCAWebs.Net

Visit us on the web at:
www.healthiermomsandbabies.org

HEALTH CORNER



Dr. Thomas Wheeler, Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist, now with Fort Wayne Perinatal Center, is back to enlighten us about high blood pressure in pregnancy. The terms most people have heard to describe this condition are pre-eclampsia, toxemia or pregnancy-induced hypertension.

Could you explain the latest classifications of gestational hypertension to our readers?

Hypertensive disease occurs in about 15% of gestations and is responsible for a great deal of pregnancy-related morbidity. Preeclampsia is most common in first pregnancies and has a hereditary pattern. Elevated blood pressures, protein in the urine, and consequent edema (swelling) are the hallmark triad of preeclampsia. Toxemia is the popular term for the same condition. The term comes from the "toxin" thought to be in the mother's blood that causes the hypertension and the swelling. The "toxin" is produced by the placenta when it can no longer maintain an adequate supply of nutrients. Delivery of the placenta, and of course the baby as well, removes the "toxin"; and the symptoms subside.

Gestational hypertension has replaced the term "pregnancy-induced hypertension" to describe mothers with elevated blood pressures but without proteinuria or edema. Symptoms develop after 20 weeks' gestation, and blood pressures return to normal levels after delivery. The urgency for delivery of the neonate is less pressing as long as fetal growth is satisfactory.

What are the treatments for these different conditions?

Delivery always offers a cure for the mother, but that is not always the best option for the fetus. Prior to 36 weeks' gestation, we try to continue the pregnancy as these extra days are valuable to the neonate. Patients who are too sick to manage at home but not yet sick enough to deliver may be monitored in the hospital setting. Hypertension often improves with bed rest. Corticosteroids may also be given if delivery is anticipated before 36 weeks. Medications are sometimes used to lower maternal blood pressure but these are used with caution. Rapidly reducing maternal blood pressure also reduces blood flow to the fetus with harmful consequences.

Patients with gestational hypertension strive to keep their diastolic blood pressure below 95 mm Hg. This may be accomplished with changes in behavior, but medications are added when necessary. Hypertensive patients are seen more frequently in the third trimester with careful attention paid to proper fetal growth.

What symptoms might a pregnant woman with hypertension experience?

(Continued on page 4)

A Message from the Director



A few weeks ago, I went to Aldi's before my regular trip to Kroger. It wasn't that I had to save money—I just felt like I should. The parking lot was packed.

When I walked in, I expected the aisles to be crowded, but they weren't. Then I saw that one check out lane had a line with over 50 people--all with job applications. People from every walk of life, from disheveled and wearing sweat pants to a man in a suit with a briefcase. There was a woman from my church there with her young adult son, both of them with applications.

From the middle of the line someone called out, "Sally!" It was one of my former clients. She was hoping to get this job because it was within walking distance of her apartment, albeit almost a mile away. Her position at her retail job had been eliminated because sales were down. Her vehicle broke down, and she and her fiancé spent a good part of the money they had saved for their wedding to get it repaired. It still doesn't run well. I wished her the best as I wondered what her odds of getting the job were, compared to the woman from my church, the guy in the suit or even the young woman behind her in line wearing dress pants and nice shoes. I wondered if she and her fiancé will really have the wherewithal to get married in October.

The trip to Aldi's was sad confirmation that the economy is every bit as bad as they say it is. A year ago, I thought Healthier Moms and Babies needed a marketing plan, but it seems pregnant women are finding us easily now. It's a tough time for pregnant women who are newly poor or chronically poor. These pregnant women face more obstacles to healthy babies than ever before. At the same time, with investments plummeting, funding is tighter than ever before. If you're still managing OK in this economy, please help us serve the many women who need services, and the babies yet to be born who face an uncertain future. Our staff and our clients thank you for your support.



Sally George

sedington@fwmep.edu

Baby Shirley

Blanca's first pregnancy with her son Brian, was a difficult experience. She dislocated her hip during in her sixth month, and had an emergency Cesarean Section when the baby was in fetal distress.

Three years later, Blanca and her husband Juan, thought they were ready for their second baby. But when Blanca began to bleed early in the pregnancy, all the anxiety returned. In November, 2007 when they heard about Healthier Moms and Babies, Juan brought Blanca to our office for help. There they were matched with nurse Deb O'Bryan, who immediately set Blanca at ease.

"I was happy to get information," Blanca said. Blanca had applied for Emergency Medicaid, but didn't receive her card, even though she was told she was eligible. "Deb O'Bryan helped me get Medicaid. The card didn't come until she called them."

Baby Shirley was born June 16, 2008, weighing six pounds, nine ounces. Blanca appreciates that Deb "brings papers every month" about Shirley's development. At Christmas, when Juan was laid off, Deb referred the family for Christmas help. "I was happy, very thankful," remarked Blanca, for the many clothes

and toys "for my boy, Brian and for Shirley."

Even though Juan had been working out of town during the pregnancy, Blanca says this pregnancy "was easy for me because Deb was helping me." When one of Blanca's friends became pregnant, and the friend's husband had an accident, Blanca told the family to call Healthier Moms and Babies. "They're happy, too," Blanca says.



Baby Shirley—5 months

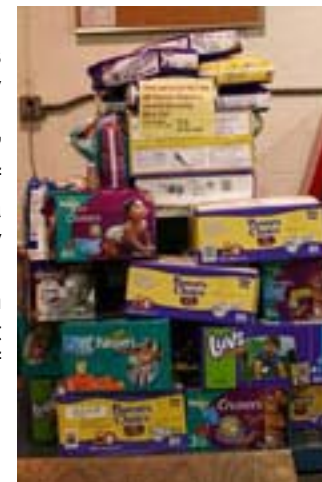
Baby Shirley says papa and mama, sits up and scoots around. She loves to eat and play with her brother, and Blanca and Juan thoroughly enjoy her.

Healthier Moms and Babies has been "a very good experience," says Blanca. "Thank you, Deb O'Bryan and Healthier Moms and Babies!"

HMB Partners with SHAREHOUSE

For the last several months, Healthier Moms and Babies has been able to "shop" at the SHAREHOUSE, a division of Love In Deed, Inc. SHAREHOUSE distributes non-perishable goods to non-profits throughout Northeast Indiana. We are able to get office supplies and household supplies (particularly diapers) that our families need for a minimal Service Fee of 19¢ a pound. We, in turn, help SHAREHOUSE by providing volunteer help to sort products and prepare them for distribution.

Healthier Moms and Babies greatly appreciates the ability to stretch our resources in this way. A huge "thank you" to SHAREHOUSE Director of Operations, Martha Casselman, and to Wally Smith from the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) who volunteers at the warehouse on behalf of Healthier Moms and Babies.



SHAREHOUSE diapers on scale

Your donations go a long way when we get things from SHAREHOUSE!

Send your donation with this form in the enclosed envelope.

Please send

_____ number of Inspiration Award Cards

To ___ Me ___ My honoree(s) at this address:

For cards sent directly to the honoree, use this inscription:

(Attach additional addresses and inscriptions for more than one card.)

Name _____

Phone or Email _____

Do We Have Your Email Address? Healthier Moms and Babies saves over \$1,400 a year in printing and postage by emailing this newsletter to 350 people. Please help us conserve our resources for direct services by allowing us to email this newsletter to you--along with timely announcements and updates. Send your email address to info@healthiermomsandbabies.org or sedington@fwmep.edu today.