

Lifestyle Can Affect Pregnancy

Women who are planning to become pregnant should consider the effect their occupation, physical fitness and diet may have on the outcome of the pregnancy, according to doctors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine.

Two members of the UNC-CH department of obstetrics and gynecology discussed the role a woman's lifestyle plays, both prior to and during pregnancy, at a recent Project Goodlife seminar on preconception health and fitness. Project Goodlife is a health enhancement program presented as a community service by the School of Medicine and North Carolina Memorial Hospital.

"Man as a species has adopted a posture that may be dangerous to its reproductive outcome," said Dr. Watson Bowes, professor of obstetrics and gynecology. Bowes said occupations which require a woman to stand or walk for long periods of time seem to have an overall negative impact on pregnancy.

"We think this has something to do with the decrease in blood flow to the uterus which occurs because of our upright posture," he explained, adding that demands on

uterine blood flow and placental transfer increase as a pregnancy progresses.

"We do see a higher incidence of such things as intrauterine growth retardation and abnormalities of the placenta in women who have ambulatory occupations, such as nurses or stewardesses, compared with women who are sedentary or who are not working at all," Bowes said.

"This does not mean everybody who works in these occupations will have a pregnancy complication," he continued. "Most people will not. Fortunately, healthy women who receive good prenatal care, eat a good diet and have a good background of health will have a good outcome of their pregnancies 95 per cent of the time."

Bowes advised pregnant women to look carefully at their occupation and investigate the possibility of limiting their activities so they can get more rest, particularly in the last three months of pregnancy.

He also urged women to discuss specific occupational hazards, such as exposure to environmental toxins or radiation, with their physicians prior to

becoming pregnant. "Resources can be brought to bear to find out exactly what these hazards might in terms of the pregnancy," he said.

Dr. William L. Koontz, clinical instructor in obstetrics and gynecology, agreed that decreased uterine flow is a major concern during pregnancy, particularly for women who undertake strenuous exercise.

"Being pregnant is a physical endeavor," Koontz said. "It's a good thing to be in shape and any exercise done prior to pregnancy is to your benefit during pregnancy."

He warned, however, that pregnancy is not the time to start a strenuous exercise activity such as running. "Exercise during pregnancy is a wonderful thing," Koontz said. "The trained athlete can probably continue to run at the same level or close to that level, perhaps a little slower. But pregnancy is not the time to decide you're going to run your first New York marathon. If you haven't done it before — don't. Stick to your Lamaze exercises on the floor and some walking after dinner."

Koontz also advised women of reproductive age to take an iron supplement to ensure that they're in optimum iron status before they begin a pregnancy. "The great majority of American women are iron-deficient," he said. "It's very difficult to eat a diet that has sufficient iron intake without eating a tremendous overload of calories."

He said vegetarian diets which include eggs and dairy products cause no problems during pregnancy if they are followed properly.

Koontz stressed that proper maternal weight gain during pregnancy is extremely important to the successful outcome of the pregnancy. "Pregnant women who are underweight are a very high risk group and very prone to have babies that are underweight, with all the problems that entails," he said. Koontz urged underweight women to have any nutritional or medical problems corrected before becoming pregnant.

Koontz also warned overweight women who are contemplating pregnancy not to go any kind of starvation diet. "Try to get as close to your optimal weight as possible with a sensible diet," he said, "and then carefully watch your weight during pregnancy."

He explained that overweight pregnant women are more likely to develop high blood pressure and gestational diabetes and to have excessively large babies.

"We're not dealing with a cosmetic thing here, we're dealing with a real medical problem."

Both physicians, and their colleagues who spoke earlier in the seminar, urged women to begin thinking about their health and their baby's health prior to becoming pregnant. To help couples make wise decisions, the department of obstetrics and gynecology conducts a preconception clinic every Friday afternoon at N.C. Memorial. For more information, call Jean Van Arnum at 966-2131.

Journal

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find it interesting that California voters came within less than one percentage point of electing the nation's first black governor. Mayor Bradley's association with Governor Brown proved to an albatross he could not shed, or perhaps racist fears prevented California voters from establishing this political precedent.

The task of President Reagan and the new Congress is to forge a coalition which, unlike President Reagan's coalition of the past two years, will put people issues first and money issues second. I urge the new administration to heed the signs of the times or it too will find its wings clipped on the course of the lame duck.



CONTRACT SIGNERS—The signing of a \$43-million fund transfer in Columbus, Ohio recently permits the construction of a new steel mill in Anambra, Nigeria. Finalizing the agreement

were, from left: Anambra Finance Commissioner Sam Ifeka, Garland Enterprises President Howard Garland and Vice President Steve Garland. (Pierce and Son Studio Photo)

Black Construction Firm Signs \$43 Million Contract With Nigeria

Call & Post News Service
COLUMBUS, OHIO — The largest transaction between a black-owned company and a black nation was finalized with the signing of transfer agreements in Columbus recently. The pact signed by black-owned Garland Enterprises and Anambra State of Nigeria sets in motion the construction of a \$43-million

steel mill in Anambra. After two years of negotiations the Nigerian government has agreed to terms as general contractor for the multi-million dollar venture which will involve the upgrading of an existing facility as well as construction of a new one.

Howard Garland, company president, says his firm will immediately set up offices in Anambra to begin the construction project which will eventually raise Anambra's annual steel production capacity from 5,000 tons to 112,000. About 50 Americans will share modern technology with Anambra while training a Nigerian work force in the operation of the plants.

Garland adds that negotiations are in progress for other projects which are part of a \$25-million economic development package. Within the next two years he expects to begin construction of five other steel mills throughout Nigeria.

Upon closing the deal for the first phase of construction Garland said, "It has been two years of hard work to cultivate the inroads to a successful African project. We now know how to do business successfully with our friends in Nigeria."

Garland hopes his efforts will serve as a role model for other black entrepreneurs to engage in commerce with Nigeria. His organization is prepared to serve as an informational link between other businesses

wishing to become "part of this international trade drama."

Because Americans tend to conduct business at a faster pace than Nigerians, U.S. firms must learn to develop a great amount of patience in dealing with Nigerian officials. Now that Garland's organization has demonstrated how to effectively deal with Nigerians, he expects other black businesses to take advantage of opportunities in resource-rich Africa.

Joining Garland in the signing of the funds transfer were his son Steve and brother James, both of whom are company vice presidents.

The Nigerian delegation was headed by Anambra Finance Commissioner Sam Ifeka and Industries Commissioner professor Dennis N. Ekpete.

Representing the State of Ohio were Deputy Development Director Sandra T. Bartly and State Senator William Bowen. The Garland deal is one of the first major projects resulting from a sister-state agreement between Ohio and Anambra.

The Chain Is Looking To Assist Black Contractors

(Continued from Front)

A prime or general contractor is usually a large firm with good cash flow and a big line of credit. They're able, in most cases, to bring in the equipment and personnel to do a job of almost any size. Sub-contractors, the category that nearly all black firms fall into, are usually small firms concentrating in one area such as grading, paving or concrete finishing.

Prime contractors usually bid to do the whole job, then they hire sub-contractors to do certain parts of the job. Prime contractors usually look for sub-contractors that can perform a job to specifications at a cost that a profit can be realized. Specifications refer to requirements put forth by the owner, in this case, the city, and drawn up by engineers and architects. Specifications question the contractor's capability to pave a road a specific length and width in so many days, or the capacity to haul several tons of dirt within a certain number of days.

Specifications must be met because a contractor is usually penalized a portion of the contract's worth for each day exceeding the contract's time period. According to Henry Bordeaux, the Chain's contract officer, there

are black firms in the state capable of doing everything that the reservoir construction will require. He said most of the sub-contracts to be awarded will be for paving, clearing and grubbing (uprooting trees and shrubbery), grading, placing and tying reinforced steel, hauling and seeding.

Bordeaux continued, however, that the prime contract will probably go to a white firm because there aren't that many black firms with the money, personnel and expertise to do a job this size.

So black firms have to position themselves to get a sub-contract, some of which are rather healthy.

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