

MATERNAL HEALTH AWARENESS

*By: Dr Kohe Alexandre
Gynaecologist*

This presentation focuses on; The Pregnancy Journey:
Antenatal Care and the Power of Good Nutrition



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The Pregnancy Journey: Antenatal Care and the Power of Good Nutrition

Pregnancy is often described as a beautiful journey, and rightly so. It's a period filled with anticipation, change, and preparation for new life. But behind the joy, there is also a great responsibility to care for both the mother's health and the growing baby. Two key pillars make this journey smoother: **antenatal care** and **good nutrition**.



Understanding Antenatal Care

Antenatal care (ANC) refers to the routine health check-ups, screenings, and support provided to pregnant women throughout pregnancy. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a minimum of **eight ANC visits** for a healthy pregnancy.

Key Objectives of Antenatal Care:

- ✓ Monitor the health of the mother and fetus
- ✓ Detect and manage complications (e.g., anemia, gestational diabetes, preeclampsia)
- ✓ Provide immunizations (e.g., tetanus)
- ✓ Offer supplements (e.g., folic acid, iron)
- ✓ Educate mothers on pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and newborn care
- ✓ Promote mental and emotional well-being



Pregnancy Journey in Trimesters

First Trimester Visit (0–12 weeks):

- ✓ Confirmation of pregnancy
- ✓ Baseline tests (blood group, HIV, hepatitis, hemoglobin, etc.)
- ✓ Estimation of due date
- ✓ Nutritional counseling begins

Second Trimester (13–27 weeks):

- ✓ Growth monitoring
- ✓ Ultrasound screening
- ✓ Blood pressure and weight monitoring
- ✓ Continued supplementation

Third Trimester (28–40 weeks):

- ✓ Preparation for delivery
- ✓ Monitoring fetal position
- ✓ Screening for complications
- ✓ Birth plan discussions



Why Nutrition is a Game-Changer

Nutrition during pregnancy isn't about eating for two, but about eating smart.

The body needs extra nutrients, not just extra calories. A balanced diet gives the baby what it needs to grow strong and helps the mother stay healthy and energized

Essential Nutrients During Pregnancy

Here are some **essential nutrients** and why they matter:

Nutrient	Role	Sources
Folic Acid	Prevents neural tube defects	Leafy greens, legumes, fortified cereals
Iron	Prevents anemia; supports fetal growth	Red meat, beans, spinach, supplements
Calcium	Builds baby's bones and teeth	Dairy, tofu, leafy greens
Protein	Supports growth of fetal tissue	Eggs, poultry, legumes, dairy
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	Brain and eye development	Fatty fish (low mercury), flaxseed, walnuts
Vitamin D	Bone development, immune function	Sunlight, eggs, fortified milk
Fiber	Prevents constipation	Whole grains, fruits, vegetables

Eating Well, Week by Week

While every pregnancy is unique, here's a simple guide for each stage:

First Trimester (Weeks 1-12)

Focus on folic acid (leafy greens, beans, fortified cereals) to support the baby's early development. Small, frequent meals can help with morning sickness.

Second Trimester (Weeks 13-27)

The baby is growing rapidly, so iron-rich foods (meat, spinach, lentils) and calcium sources (milk, yoghurt, cheese) are important. Adding more fruits and vegetables also helps with digestion.

Third Trimester (Weeks 28-40)

Energy needs rise as the baby prepares for birth. Whole grains, proteins, and healthy fats (avocados, nuts, fish) provide lasting strength. Staying hydrated is also essential.



Foods to Limit or Avoid

Some foods may not be safe during pregnancy.

These include:

- ✓ Undercooked or raw meat and fish
- ✓ Unpasteurized milk and cheese.
- ✓ Excessive caffeine.
- ✓ Alcohol (best avoided altogether).





The Bigger Picture

A healthy pregnancy is built on **two foundations**: regular antenatal care and balanced nutrition. Together, they protect the mother, support the baby's growth, and prepare both for a safe delivery.

Pregnancy is a time of change, learning, and hope. With proper care and the right foods on the plate, mothers can give their babies the best start in life. Every clinic visit and every healthy meal is a step toward a safe and joyful journey into parenthood

THANK YOU

CONTACTS

Phone No:
+254724468728

Website

<https://www.flourishcounsellingservices.co.ke/>

Email
info@flourishcounsellingservices.co.ke