YOUR PREGNANCY TEST IS POSITIVE. 
AND THE CLOCK STARTS NOW!

IMPROVING THE TIMELINESS OF PRENATAL CARE

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WHAT'S THIS INDICATOR ALL ABOUT?

o The indicator assesses the number of pregnant women who had a prenatal visit during the first trimester or within 42 days of enrollment. Only women who delivered live babies are included. They must be enrolled from 43 days prior to delivery through 56 days after delivery.

WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT THE TIMELINESS OF PRENATAL CARE INDICATOR

o Rational is that early prenatal care will help to prevent premature birth and other infant health problems. It may also improve the health of the pregnant woman.

SOUTH CAROLINA TEEN PREGNANCY/BIRTH STATISTICS

o 6,024 teens age 15-19 years gave birth in 2011
o 26% of teen moms were already teen parents.
o 20% of teen pregnancies reported in 2010 ended in abortion.
o South Carolina has the 11th highest teen birth rate in the US.
o 2011 birth rate among 15-19 year olds in 2011 was 39.1 per 1,000. National rate is 31.3 per 1,000.

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE TIMELINESS OF PRENATAL CARE

o In 2007, Medicaid was the payer for 42% of all births, costing about $4 billion dollars.

o 1.3 billion of these charges were due to births to adolescents 17 years of age and younger.

o Some studies estimate that $3 could be saved for every $1 spent on prenatal care. Other studies have questioned this financial impact and suggest that the content of prenatal care may be more important than the timing.
SO HOW ARE WE INVOLVED IN THE TIMELINESS OF PREGNATAL CARE

- Pediatricians are often the first provider to identify a teen as being pregnant.
- Pediatricians can discuss the importance of timely and consistent prenatal care.
- Pediatricians have an ongoing relationship with their teenage patients. This may encourage the patient to be compliant with prenatal care.

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS IMPEDING PEDIATRICIANS FROM IMPROVING TIMELINESS OF PREGNATAL CARE?

- The pregnant teen may not present for care within the first trimester.
- We may diagnose the teen as being pregnant but we are not likely to know the gestational age. Thus we can’t know that she will be seen for prenatal care in the first trimester.
- We may have trouble following up to be sure that the appointment for prenatal care was kept.

SO THAT’S WHAT WE CAN’T DO. HOW ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO?

- We can ask the right questions of our teen patients at both well and sick visits.
- We can discuss the importance of timely prenatal care with the teen.
- We can set up the appointment for the first prenatal visit.
- We can call to follow up after that first appointment.

SO HOW IS PALMETTO PEDIATRICS DOING?

- 66 pregnancy tests ordered between January and June 2013
- 1 positive pregnancy test
- Documentation that all options were discussed and that the patient (18 years old) planned to involve her parents. No specific OB referral was made and no specific follow-up was documented.

WHAT CAN PALMETTO PEDIATRICS DO BETTER?

- More specific documentation of discussion surrounding positive pregnancy tests
- Referral from our practice to OB with documentation of the referral details in the chart
- Follow up phone call to be sure that the OB appointment was kept.