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NURSING

PHS 212

PHYSIOLOGICAL ADAPTIONS OF FEMALE TO PREGNANACY

Pregnancy is a unique period in a woman’s life. A number of anatomic, physiological, physical, psychological, biochemical changes occur. These changes may include:

* Changes in the body weight; continuing weight increase in pregnancy is considered to be one favorable indication of maternal adaption. There can be slight increase in weight during early pregnancy if the woman experiences much nausea and vomiting.
* Changes in urinary system; the kidneys extract waste from the blood and turn it into urine. They must work extra hard to filter the mother own waste products from her blood, plus those of the fetus and get rid of them in the urine. Therefore, there is also an increase in the amount of urine produced during pregnancy.
* Changes in gastrointestinal system; during pregnancy, the muscles in the walls of the gastrointestinal system relax slightly and the rate at which food is squeezed out of the stomach.
* Skin changes; changes in the woman’s hormones and mechanical stretching of her growing abdomen and breasts are responsible for several changes I the skin during pregnancy. The dark line may appear between the umbilicus (belly button) and the symphysis pubis (pubic bone)
* During pregnancy, many women get short of breath because the growing baby crowds the baby’s lungs and she has less room to breathe. she may also experience indigestion as her stomach is pushed.
* Estrogen and progesterone are the chief pregnancy hormones.
* The expected increase in weight of a mother in an average pregnancy is 9-12kg.