

## Hold the well-meaning pregnancy predictions — often they're hooey



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It begins the minute you announce you're pregnant. People start offering advice, making predictions about the sex of the baby and sharing personal pregnancy stories.

You know what I'm talking about: If you have more hair on your legs than normal, then you're having a girl. Or depending on how you carry the baby (high or low), you can determine its sex.

While your friends and family mean well with their input, don't put a lot of faith into their predictions.

I've heard it all since I started delivering babies — both from expectant parents just looking for some reassurance and even from others during my own pregnancy.

So let's clear up some of the more common myths often associated with pregnancy.

**Heartburn during pregnancy means a hairy baby.**

The truth is, there's no association between heartburn and the amount of hair on your newborn. You could have a lot of heartburn and deliver a completely bald baby. Acid reflux is common during pregnancy but not an accurate barometer for the number of hair bows you may need to purchase.

**Low fetal heart rate means it's a boy.**

Hate to break it to you, but again, no association with heart rate and the gender of your baby. Bottom line, we want all babies to have a normal heart rate. Once things progress in the pregnancy, we get more insight into gender.

**Hair dyes can be harmful to the baby.**

This is a resounding "no." There's absolutely no reason for you to ditch your regular pampering routine during pregnancy. If you've always been a

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blonde, continue to be — don't let those roots grow out, ladies. If you do need a dye job, just make sure it's done in a well-ventilated environment.

**I shouldn't get the flu shot if I'm pregnant.**

Wrong! The flu shot is a must. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend the flu shot at any point during the three trimesters of your pregnancy. The opinion is the shot will have no negative effects on baby. Pregnant women have suppressed immune systems already, and if you contract the respiratory flu, it can turn serious very quickly. Tell those who'll be around you during your pregnancy to get the flu shot, too.

**I should put sex on the back burner when I'm pregnant.**

Unless you have complications — bleeding placenta, pre-term

labor, etc. — sex is fine. And despite your husband's ego, he will not hurt the baby. As a matter of fact, if you're in the third trimester and are anticipating delivery, have sex. It can actually initiate contractions. That said, if you're not comfortable, don't feel pressured.

So remember, the thing about these myths (and countless others) is that it's just fun for people to think they might know if you're having a boy or a girl, or even what your new baby will look like. When people give you predictions or advice, just smile, enjoy your baby bump and look forward to the arrival of your baby boy or girl!

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