

Baby Boom (Kolkatamirror.com, June 23, 2009)

Baby Boom Nutrition, exercise, *psychological health and doctor's help are essential for a healthy pregnancy and healthy child* Expectant mothers got an insight into the healthiest practices pertaining to nutrition, exercises, etc, during the gestation period to give birth to a healthy and active child at LifeCell International's Antenatal and labour preparation workshop held at The Senator Hotel on June 22. The workshop, which was headed by Dr. Sonali Shivlani, an antenatal specialist from Mumbai, was attended by expecting mothers between 29 to 35 years and their husbands.

Pregnancy is often the most ecstatic experience in a woman's life. LifeCell aimed at demystifying myths pertaining to pregnancy as well as bolstering efforts to boost the health of a mother and her baby. Dr. Sonali, Only a healthy mother can give birth to a rosy baby introducing the session, said, "The two biggest challenges for Indian women, vis-à-vis pregnancies are the old wives tales that continue to weave their effect on even the most women, as well as the incapacity of women to include exercise as an integral part of one's routine." The workshop touched the five foundational topics of Diet and Nutrition, Exercise, Pregnancy Information, Post-Natal Care and Labour and Delivery.

The four essential pillars of a healthy pregnancy and consequently a healthy child are known to be Nutrition, Exercise, Psychological health and Doctor's Help. Shivlani stated, "The first thing to remember about nutrition is that mindlessly gobbling away might not necessarily add to the progeny's nutrition. The placenta, being a filter of sorts, only allows the right kind of food in and keeps the harmful food out and Nutrition for baby that results in fat build-up and weight gain, which in turn makes a normal delivery difficult." Eat with care Mindless eating will not help your baby Shivlani also elucidated on the importance of Lamaze technique, which is a combination of breathing and relaxation exercises. The technique is further buttressed by the philosophy of allowing birth to be an absolutely natural process. Shivlani said, "The most important thing to remember throughout is the importance of intake of water. Even the slightest hint of dehydration can bring about an early labour."

On the importance of doctors, Shivlani said, "Mothers-in-law in India pose a major threat with their superstitions and old wives tales. While doctors keep guiding women, they ultimately, due to familial pressures, are forced to follow other practices. I encountered one such case in a patient of mine who was led to believe that from her third month onward she would have to eat almonds every day, adding one to the number with every passing day. By the 42nd day, she was ingesting 42 almonds, and had to reverse the trend and descend the number on a daily basis!" On the importance of psychological health, Shivlani said, "Feeling sad, depressed or lonely after the birth of the child are caused by the imbalance of hormones resulting in postpartum depression. The doctor must be consulted as mental health also affects breast milk production, which affects the child. Doctors' advice must be partaken at every step." Signing off, Shivlani said, "Indian women have a huge advantage having a body structure that eases pregnancy." Having a baby is the most beautiful experience for a woman.