

## **DR. DEC'S INFORMATION LETTER TO OBSTETRICS PATIENTS**

You have contacted the office and indicated that you believe you are pregnant. This is because either you have missed one/two menstrual periods and/or have done one (or several) home pregnancy tests. You have chosen Dr. Dec to provide your Prenatal care. This will involve regular pregnancy check-ups, helping you decide on who will deliver your baby and who will provide your post-delivery care.

Dr. Dec usually initially sends you for some confirmatory blood-work to measure the pregnancy hormone "Beta HCG" as well as a "Progesterone" hormone level. By knowing what these levels are, we can get a sense of how far along your pregnancy is and if there is a risk for possible miscarriage. If your Progesterone tests are below certain levels, Dr. Dec may ask you to repeat the blood-work on a weekly basis until stable or he may suggest that you use Progesterone suppositories placed inside the vagina, to raise the Progesterone level, which will lessen the chance of miscarriage.

The next step is to book an initial prenatal appointment. This is usually done when you are about 10 weeks along. That appointment consists of a comprehensive review of your medical and pregnancy history, a detailed physical and gynecological exam including your weight, blood pressure and urine testing; listening to your baby's heart rate, and giving you a requisition to get a slate of blood tests. This usually also includes an HIV test, as this has become quite standard for all patients regardless of your risk. If you do not wish to have all the recommended blood-work drawn, please advise us. The other important test to be discussed is the eFTS or "Enhanced First Trimester Screen" which consists of a Blood Test plus a screening Ultrasound before 13 weeks, plus another Blood Test around 16 weeks, which tests for Down's Syndrome. You will also require an Ultrasound to screen the baby's anatomy between 18-22 weeks. There is also an option to do Non-invasive Prenatal Testing [NIPT] which is a more detailed genetic testing, for other genetic abnormalities & can accurately determine the sex of the baby. You will be given a "Prenatal Information Package" which will contain much information on things such as prenatal classes, exercise, breastfeeding, eFTS, baby information, tips on diet as well as Hospital Information.

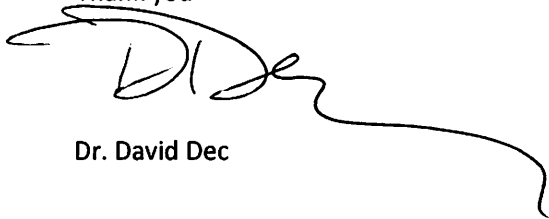
Your appointment schedule will consist of an appointment every 4 weeks until you hit 30 weeks, then every 2 weeks until you hit 36 weeks, and then weekly until delivery. You may need to come in more frequently depending on your health or the baby's status. If your Blood type happens to be Rh negative, you will need additional injections of Rh antibodies (WinRho). You may also have a sugar test recommended around 26-28 weeks, where you drink a sugary liquid and have blood drawn an hour later. Between 33-36 weeks, Dr. Dec or your Obstetrics provider will need to take another swab from your vagina & anal area to screen for bacteria called "Group B Strep". If this comes back positive, then the recommendation will be intravenous antibiotics during your labour, to protect the baby against infection.

As you are likely aware, in March of 2013, the Niagara Health System (NHS) opened the doors of a brand new hospital in St. Catharines. With this came new challenges regarding how the Maternity, Obstetrics & Pediatrics Departments operate. As of that date, all obstetrical patients now deliver at the St. Catharines Hospital Site on Fourth Avenue. There are no more scheduled deliveries in Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Welland, Port Colborne or Niagara-on-the-Lake. Dr. Dec gave up his delivery privileges at the St. Catharines Site as of January 1, 2018. It was posing several challenges with transportation, travel time (25 minutes door to door), traffic concerns, office schedule changes, amongst other challenges. The NHS has developed an Obstetrician On-Call Rota whereby 12 of the OB/GYN's in the region have agreed to provide 12 hour shifts in the St. Catharines hospital beginning @ 8am & 8pm, so there will always be someone on site in case of an emergency.

While Dr. Dec will continue to monitor you throughout your pregnancy, he will make every effort to refer you to your provider of choice during your actual delivery. Your options include a Family Physician who still delivers babies (Dr. MacTavish & Dr. Wilke in Niagara Falls, or Dr. Stephanie Demarco & Dr. Adriana Cappelletti in St. Catharines), a Midwife or an Obstetrician. We will review the pros/cons of each.

As always, I am happy to discuss any concerns that you may have at any time.  
I am looking forward to following you during your pregnancy.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Dec', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Dr. David Dec