



Woes of pregnancy

I can remember from my first pregnancy that the physical changes weren't easy to deal with. Back then, I was working full-time in the field until my third trimester. Literally in a field of some kind, doing a job that involved tools and lots of walking, and after that in an office until the week before Melise was due. I remember being tired, achy, swollen, hot and itchy.

I thought, based on that experience, that I was prepared for the second one. I even thought it would be a breeze compared to the first because I'm not working any more. . .Um, let's just say I was mistaken. Every irritating side-effect of pregnancy feels like the first time all over again.

My greatest complaint of either pregnancy is the pressure on my bladder. The bathroom has become my second home! I frequent it all day and all night. I'm not sure how much sleep I actually get anymore because I recall more trips to the bathroom every night than dreams. I remember one night during my first pregnancy that I got out of bed and my husband said, "Where are you going?"

I replied, "I'm going to the bathroom and getting a drink of water."

He said, "That's counter-productive, don't you think, honey?" Ha ha. I think of that line during every trip to the bathroom now. I can tell how late a certain bathroom trip is by how much sense it makes to me. It must be close to dawn when I find myself thinking: Boy, this is counter-productive. I need to stop drinking or peeing, but which one to give up?

Did you know pregnant women start urinating more often as soon as the second month of their pregnancy? It is caused by the hormone called "human chorionic gonadotropin" (better known as hCG) which has an important job nourishing the egg. As a side-effect, it also increases the body's blood and fluid volume, thus increasing how much fluid goes through the kidneys and bladder. That would all be very fascinating, except I barely had time to type that paragraph between trips to the bathroom!

The Laughing Mom: humorous tales of motherhood

Written by Susan Pfaltzgraff

Then, of course, the baby increases in size and mobility and suddenly the bladder is under the constant pressure from kicks and squirms. I took a prenatal class in my first pregnancy and almost fainted when they showed a diagram of a woman's body right before her baby is ready to be born. The bladder in the diagram looked like a deflated balloon! Is it just a straight-through shot at that point? I'm amazed it still functions under all that pressure.

What I didn't realize ahead of time with this pregnancy was the added stress on my body from my daughter Melise. She is 2 years old now, which means that she is somewhat independent and can follow simple orders. That doesn't mean, however, that she doesn't need her mommy.

Hugs, cuddles, assistance in climbing steps or getting into chairs and picking her up after a tumble are still necessary duties of my motherhood that I wouldn't trade for the world. But I am reminded of the toll they take on me every night when my back is in such pain that I would like to replace it. And the infamous bladder always calls when she is fast asleep on my lap.

But just about every pain is forgotten in that moment when I have my arms around one sweet baby and I feel the wiggle of the next one inside me. All these pains just might be worth it.