



HEALTH AWARENESS

Why Expectant Mothers Should Get Their Necks Checked

(NAPSA)—Pregnancy can be an exciting time for a woman. Yet it is also the time when a thyroid condition may surface or become more difficult to control.

That's why the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE) is encouraging women who are considering pregnancy or are already pregnant to have their thyroid checked.

"Although many thyroid disorders that affect pregnancy can be treated easily, early detection is critical," said AACE President Richard Hellman. The organization is offering a list of the "Things Every Mother Should Know," which can be found at www.thyroidawareness.com.

Here are a few facts that mothers should know:

- **Why the Thyroid Is Important During Pregnancy:** Even before conception, thyroid conditions that have lingered untreated can hinder a woman's ability to become pregnant or can lead to pregnancy complications. Thyroid hormone is necessary for a baby's normal brain development, since, in early pregnancy, babies get thyroid hormone from their mothers.

- **Who Should Be Tested:** Doctors recommend that all women at high risk for thyroid disease or women who are experiencing symptoms should be tested. Anyone with a personal or family history of thyroid disease, type 1 diabetes mellitus or other autoimmune condition should be tested before becoming pregnant.

- **Hypothyroidism & Pregnancy:** In the U.S., most women who develop hypothyroidism (an



"Things Every Mother Should Know" may be found at www.thyroidawareness.com to help expectant mothers learn how thyroid disease may affect their pregnancy and child.

underactive thyroid gland) during pregnancy develop a mild version of the disease. Even a mild version can contribute to complications. Fortunately, the condition can be easily treated with thyroid hormone pills.

- **Hyperthyroidism & Pregnancy:** A woman with hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid) can miscarry in the first trimester or suffer a host of serious ailments. Hyperthyroidism, if untreated, can also lead to stillbirth, premature birth or a low birth weight for the baby.

Mollena Fabricant was diagnosed with a thyroid condition known as Hashimoto's thyroiditis in 2003. As the mother of two young boys, with a third child on the way, she is conscientious about monitoring her condition.

"I make sure to visit with my endocrinologist every single month during pregnancy," said Fabricant.

For more information, visit www.thyroidawareness.com.



Note to Editors: While January is Thyroid Awareness Month, this story can run at any time.