

Problems in Prenatal Development

Mrs. Gudgeon

Losing a Baby

- **When a baby is lost before 20 weeks of pregnancy it is called a miscarriage.**
- **If it occurs after 20 weeks it is called a stillbirth.**

Types of Birth Defects

- **These are problems some babies may be born with that threaten their life.**
- **There are hundreds of birth defects.**
- **Some are mild and others can be lifelong severities or can cause death.**
- **About 3 out of every 10 children in the United States are born with birth defects.**

Causes of Birth Defects

- **Scientist don't understand what causes about 60% of all birth defects.**
- **Some are caused by factors in the environment.**
- **Others are caused by abnormal genes or errors in chromosomes.**
- **Many are result of the environment.**

Environmental Causes of Birth Defects

- During the first few weeks of the pregnancy the baby is developing vital organs and systems for survival.
- It is at this time that the baby completely depends on the mother for nourishment and oxygen.
- This means that the mother must make some smart decisions.

Environmental Causes contd.

- **The decisions that could affect the baby include:**
- **Nutrition**
- **Any diseases during pregnancy**
- **Harmful substances (alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs)**
- **Some medicines**
- **Exposure to outside hazards like radiation**

Heredity Causes of Birth Defects

- Thousands of genes make up a genetic blueprint.
- For each person about five or six of the recessive genes are imperfect.
- The problem occurs when the same defective recessive gene is passed from each parent.
- Sometimes too, the defective gene is dominant.
- Sometimes inherited conditions only affect one sex. Examples Hemophilia and color blindness only affect males.

Errors in Chromosomes

- Sometimes there are too many or too few chromosomes in each of the baby's cells.
- This is not a hereditary defect because the child does not inherit the condition from a parent.
- The most common birth defect is Down Syndrome.
- One child in every 800 births has this condition.

Prevention and Diagnosis of Birth Defects

- **Genetic Counseling**
- **Prenatal Tests**
 - **Ultrasound**
 - **Amniocentesis**
 - **Chorionic villi sampling**

Please answer these questions

- 1. What is the difference between a miscarriage and a stillbirth?**
- 2. What is the cause of Down Syndrome?
What is one factor that increases a baby's chances of this?**
- 3. What are four causes of birth defects?**
- 4. What are some ways to prevent prenatal problems?**
- 5. What can be learned from an ultrasound, amniocentesis, and chorionic villi sampling?**