

## **PREGNANT CHICK USER GUIDE #2:**

### **Pregnancy Do's and Don'ts for Friends, Family Members and Busybodies on Trains**

Dear friends, family members and aforementioned others,

You are reading this because someone you know or are sitting next to is growing a small human somewhere beneath her stretch-tastic maternity-pant pleats. First, a warning. White pointer sharks, venomy cobras and premenstrual redback spiders have nothing on pregnant women when it comes to unexpected aggression. As American writer Jeff Vogel puts it: 'Do not underestimate the dangers that a pregnant woman can pose to you. She may be big and puffy, but she can attack quickly and without warning.'

You may be the unwitting cause of some of these hissy fits because you have accidentally said something stupid. Maybe you wanted to make polite conversation. Maybe these subjects make you nervous and you lost control of your mouth. Or maybe you really thought you could help. Well, regardless of your motivation, the time has come to agree on some pregnancy ground rules.

- **PLEASE DON'T** comment on how much weight she's gained unless it is to reassure her that it makes her look even more ravishing and youthful than usual.
  
- **PLEASE DON'T** tell her she looks tired. If she looks tired, she probably is tired and knows she looks tired. The last thing she needs is a reminder that everyone else has noticed, too.
  
- **PLEASE DON'T** touch her stomach unless she expressly says you're welcome to cop a feel. Just because



a woman is pregnant does not mean her private areas are suddenly a free-for-all. How would you like it if she reached out and gave your testicles or boobs a squeeze (followed, perhaps, by a throwaway comment about them being either too big, small or lopsided)?

- PLEASE DON'T try to make pregnancy jokes — particularly if they're at the expense of her body.
- PLEASE DON'T give her advice about anything unless she asks for it.
- PLEASE DON'T tell her she's so huge she simply must be carrying twins.
- PLEASE DON'T tell her horror stories about labour or lecture her about whether she should or shouldn't have drugs.
- PLEASE DON'T cackle uproariously while you tell her that everything good and wonderful and restful about life is about to end.

\* \* \*

- **PLEASE DO** remember that correlation is not the same thing as causation (just because a woman you read about on-line gave birth to a baby with a vestigial tail after eating a Tater Tot Hotdish doesn't mean that Tater Tot Hotdishes cause vestigial tails).
- **PLEASE DO** note that statistical sample sizes need to be more than one (just because your child didn't sleep through the night until he graduated from uni doesn't mean hers will be the same).

- PLEASE DO tell her stories of people you know who had great births and who love being parents.
  
- PLEASE DO compliment her appearance and mean it (she'll know if you're telling porkies).
  
- PLEASE DO graciously respect her wishes when it comes to who gets to hang out in the labour room and who gets to visit after the birth.
  
- PLEASE DO offer her practical help such as carrying stuff, cooking stuff and cleaning stuff up.

Thanking you in advance,  
Pregnant women everywhere.

