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Book Reviews & Interviews

Your Plus-Size Pregnancy  
The Ultimate Guide for the Full-Figured Expectant Mom  
by Brette McWhorter Sember with Bruce D. Rodgers, M.D.

There is a plethora of pregnancy books on the market these days but only one that focuses on the full-figured expectant mother - *Your Plus-Size Pregnancy: The Ultimate Guide for the Full-Figured Expectant Mom*. The author, Brette McWhorter Sember, a plus-size mom of two, even recommends using her book as a supplement to those other pregnancy books. But the beauty of *Your Plus-Size Pregnancy* is not only the positive, uplifting and encouraging information, but also the graceful balance Sember achieves while discussing the risks of plus-size pregnancy - informative and honest, but in perspective, so that large women aren't needlessly frightened and discouraged from becoming pregnant or enjoying their pregnancies.

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In fact, Sember is full of encouragement. As she writes, "the goal of this book is to provide you with the solid medical facts and to explain them in a way that isn't anxiety inducing or frightening. It's also to help you see that your plus-size pregnancy is not a terrible medical condition, but is instead something for you to enjoy and appreciate."

Sember beautifully achieves her goal. The "cold, hard scientific facts" are included but put into perspective in an understandable and realistic manner.

Beyond those hard scientific facts, the author discusses:

- How to accept yourself for who you are as well as dealing with self-esteem issues and stress. You will also learn how to celebrate and honor your pregnancy. Pamper yourself and remember that goal - a healthy baby! Sember even discusses how to shop for maternity clothing that will look great on you rather than something purchased at a tent and awning company.
- Coping with weight gain - particularly if you've spent years trying to lose weight, it can be difficult watching the numbers on the scale go up. Sember says, "The problem a lot of plus-size women face is how to gain the recommended amount of weight without gaining too much and how to increase calories without letting your eating get out of control."
- Dealing with pregnancy discomforts and explaining which may be pregnancy-related and which may be size-related.
- Working with your health care provider such as finding a size-friendly or size-accepting staff, types of questions to ask when looking for a care provider (i.e. do they have large size gowns and blood pressure cuffs and access to sophisticated ultrasound equipment since it can be difficult to get good quality results on plus-size women). The author also includes a list of things which can tell you if your care provider's office is size-friendly as well as questions to ask about weight gain and weight-related issues.

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- How to take control of your health care instead of shying away from things that may scare you. As Sember wisely states, "Once you are an informed patient, you can ask thoughtful questions that allow your provider to see that you have basic knowledge about pregnancy and your condition, thus making him or her more comfortable giving you in-depth answers."
- Coping with size-related insensitivity whether it's in your care provider's office or at the hospital.
- Medical care and tests - Sember discusses the tests that might in some way be impacted by weight. Although it's important to understand the risks, Sember emphatically states, "While it's true that being overweight can impact the risk for certain conditions or problems, this doesn't mean any of these will happen to you or even that they are likely to happen to you . . . Don't be overwhelmed by statistics. For some conditions, you'll see that larger-size women have a risk that is two or three times greater than that of average-weight women. This sounds scary until you realize how low the risk is for average-weight women. Something that is a 1-percent risk among all pregnant women and has twice the risk in larger women puts your risk at only 2 percent, or two out of 100. Having a double or triple risk factor then doesn't seem as frightening.
- Labor & Delivery -- the importance of childbirth classes is discussed as well as certain aspects of labor and delivery that may be difficult for larger women such as being self-conscious to use birth balls and tubs. Possible birth complications and c-sections are also mentioned. Again, Sember does an excellent job of explaining the risks while keeping them in perspective.
- Nursing as a plus-size mom - yes! It can be done and done well.
- Your postbirth body
- A wonderful resource section concludes the book.

Ladies, if you are plus-sized, please know that you can be overweight and healthy AND enjoy wonderful pregnancies and deliver perfectly healthy babies. Brette McWhorter Sember shows you how to do it with dignity and information and a bit of humor tossed in for fun.

StorkNet is VERY pleased to heartily recommend *Your Plus-Size Pregnancy!*

### To Purchase:

- *Your Plus-Size Pregnancy* at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)
- *Your Plus-Size Pregnancy* at [Amazon UK](http://Amazon UK)
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