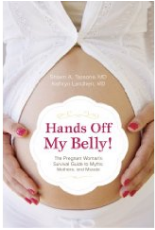


## Five Pregnancy Myths You Need to Know

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Expectant mothers are magnets for unsolicited advice. Some of the [advice is rude](#), some is helpful and the rest is based on old wives tales. Our guest bloggers today, Drs. Shawn A. Tassone and Kathryn M. Landherr, are going to help us separate fact from fiction. As experienced gynecologists who are a husband-and-wife team of physicians, and parents of four children, they wrote the newly released humorous and informative book, "[Hands Off My Belly! The Pregnant Woman's Guide to Surviving Myths, Mothers, and Moods](#)" published by Prometheus Books. Here they share an excerpt of five surprising myths and truths about pregnancy. Thank you doctors!

### 1) I heard that if I eat more breakfast cereal I will have a boy.

Really, can you imagine? Actually there is a shred of truth in this statement based on a study done in England regarding pre-pregnancy diets and their relation to fetal gender. Scientists found more boys were born to women who ate a high-calorie diet. More specifically, a higher percentage of boys were born to women who ate breakfast cereal each morning prior to becoming pregnant.

### 2) There are more babies born during a full moon.

One study actually evaluated individual behaviors and their relationship to the lunar cycle. The researchers discovered that, contrary to popular belief, the phases of the moon did not increase the rates of birth.

### 3) I will automatically receive an episiotomy during delivery.

Episiotomy is probably one of the more common procedures that is performed on a pregnant woman, but that is not to say that the procedure itself is common. It has been estimated that episiotomies are performed in less than 5% of all deliveries and the numbers are decreasing. In most instances the baby's head or shoulders will make its own room as it comes out. Your physician should discuss the episiotomy before performing the procedure and you should have a say as to whether or not you agree to have the episiotomy performed.



### 4) Clean teeth mean lower chances of preterm birth.

You have many reasons to smile when you're pregnant. Healthy teeth and gums will indeed reduce

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the risks of preterm birth. The preterm birth rate for those women receiving regular dental care was 6.4%, while the birth rate for those not receiving dental care was 11 %.

### **5) If the fetal heart rate is below 140 beats per minute, it's a boy; if it's above 140, it's a girl.**

This is probably the most common of the fetal gender prediction myths we discuss in the book. Studies, however, show no significant difference between a male and female heart rate. Fetal heart rates are normal anywhere between 120-160 beats per minute and if the baby is excited or relaxed, it will have a direct effect on his/her heart rate.

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