

You can so climb the ladder while feeling those kicks.



babyproof your job

Sporting a bump shouldn't make you less of a contender at the office. Crush your top worries with these expert tips.

MOMS-TO-BE HAVE TONS OF DEMANDS on their time and energy, not the least of which is work. Day-to-day responsibilities seem that much harder when you're also scurrying to a prenatal checkup or trying not to heave in the middle of a presentation, but everything's about to get mega-manageable: Marjorie Greenfield, M.D., author of *The Working Woman's Pregnancy Book*, shares smart advice that will keep you on your A game.

PREG JOB PROB

"I'm really not feeling great."

Right now, the entire day can feel like a post-lunch 3 p.m. slump, especially if you're trying to keep your condition on the DL. To combat fatigue, take a whiff of peppermint essential oil to make you feel more alert and invigorated. A stash of Ginger People Gin Gin chews (\$17 for 3-ounce bag, abesmarket.com) and Tums in your desk drawer will help quell nausea and heartburn, respectively. And if you're heading into a big meeting, Greenfield recommends grabbing a seat by the door: you'll be able to dash to the restroom without tripping over colleagues. »

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PREG JOB PROB

"I have so many OB appointments."

No one enjoys going to the doctor (tests! needles! scales!), but rushing to and fro in the middle of a busy day adds an unnecessary layer of stress. Not only are you concerned about the conspicuousness of being out of the office, but there's also anxiety stemming from wasting time in transit or in the waiting room. The solution? "Try to get the very first appointment in the morning," Greenfield advises. "It's more likely to run on time, which gets you into the office promptly." If that's not possible, aim for the last appointment, so there's less pressure to report back to duty. Still, you can use your waiting-room time to catch up on email, says Greenfield: "We're all so well-connected now; it's not like we're invisible or unreachable if we're not at our desk."

PREG JOB PROB

"I'm becoming a space case!"

"Momnesia" may have been a buzzword a few years ago, but studies have yet to show that carrying a baby actually impairs a woman's thought process, Greenfield says. Still, she's heard countless stories from folks blaming "preggo brain" for a colleague's mistakes. "Most moms-to-be feel they're simply more distracted versus cognitively impaired," she says. Keep fastidious to-do lists using an app that works on both your phone and computer, such as Wunderlist, and for the odd moment you're without either, try this trick: Clench your right hand while going over info you need to remember, then when you want to recall it, repeat the action with your left hand. Research suggests this has helped with retention. It's worth a shot, right?

IS IT PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION?

According to Emily Martin, vice president and general counsel for the National Women's Law Center, the basic test is whether you're being treated the same as someone who is similar in their ability to work but is not pregnant. "If you were set to work on a project with a major deadline a month after your due date, and your boss takes you off it because you can't be there—something he'd do for someone getting heart surgery too—that's legal," she says. "But if he or she demotes you or tries to reduce your hours because he assumes your pregnancy means 'you're not up to it right now,' that's not permissible."

Also not OK: being denied reasonable on-the-job accommodations that the company would make for someone with a physical condition or injury. So if your coworker with a bad back gets the special ergonomic chair but you're stuck with a cheapo seat despite a request, it's time to pipe up.

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

If you suspect you're being shafted simply because you're expecting, Martin advises taking the following steps:

- Keep records of any instances you consider discriminatory, noting dates, people involved and details. (Emails too!)
- File paperwork with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eeoc.gov) within your state's designated statute of limitations. In some states that's up to a year, but in others it's only six months, so don't delay.
- Address the issue with HR first. They can often mediate as an impartial party.