



# Stork Health Tips

## Pregnancy and Old Wives' Tales

Almost by definition, pregnant women are not "old wives". However, you wouldn't know this based on the myths, legends, and old wives' tales that are passed from one young pregnant woman to another. Have you been told (or worse, have you told someone) that you are having a boy because you are carrying the baby high? Have you been told that significant indigestion during pregnancy indicates that you will have a child with a full head of hair? Perhaps my personal favorite is the common myth that the baby's heart rate will predict the sex of the child.

Many years ago, when I was a medical student on an OB rotation, my older sister informed me that she was going to have a boy because the heart rate was 144 beats/minute. When I informed her that this was not true, she insisted that I ask my attending obstetrician. Having not yet fully developed my "God complex" and still willing to learn, I reluctantly asked. His response was that it works out to be true 50% of the time. I laughed and informed my sister of his response. She responded: "I told you I was right!" To this day, I don't think she realizes that questions such as this always have a 50/50

chance. By the way, she had the first of four beautiful daughters.

Old wives tales often have regional and cultural roots. Many Hispanics believe that eating peppers or even spicy food will cause children to have cherry red skin spots often referred to as "stork bites". Couples from the Near and Far East plan sexual liaisons under the Northern Lights with the belief that it improves fertility. In societies where there are strong cultural reasons to have a boy, everything from specific food intake to body position during conception is manipulated.

Contact Stork Medical to store your baby's cord blood: 866-65-STORK, [www.Stork.MD](http://www.Stork.MD)

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## So What's the Harm?

In reality, for most couples, and in most situations, there is not any harm. Perhaps, articles such as this should not be written, as they take away some of the fun of expecting.

On the other hand, for a woman to feel guilty about

eating a pepper or to feel as though it is up to her to direct the sex of her baby by changing her behavior is an unnecessary burden that can be quickly alleviated with proper medical information.

By the way, if you happen to see my sister,

who still believes she is right, or my sister-in-law who is 7 for 7 in predicting the sex of her friends children by swinging a gold chain over their pregnant bellies to see which direction it swings, please don't tell them about this article.

☺ For more Health Tips visit: [www.Stork.MD](http://www.Stork.MD).

☺ Stork's lab is an industry leader in cord blood storage and stem cell transplant. Our lab uses a closed collection system which virtually eliminates the chance for laboratory contamination.