AMNIOTIC FLUID - The fluid which surrounds the baby in the uterus.

CARBOHYDRATES - Carbohydrates are a component of food, along with protein and fat. They are also referred to as “starch” or “starchy foods”. The Starch, Milk and Fruit food groups contain mostly carbohydrates.

CESAREAN SECTION - A delivery of the baby through a surgical incision in the abdomen and uterus.

FASTING BLOOD GLUCOSE TEST - The lab test done to check blood sugar levels. Fasting means that this test is done before you have anything to eat.

FOLACIN/FOLATE/FOLIC ACID - These are different names for the same B-vitamin in foods. In this book, this B vitamin will be referred to by the name “folate”. The need for folate is particularly high during pregnancy in order for the baby to develop properly. Good food sources of folate include dark green leafy vegetables, orange juice, and cooked dried beans.

GESTATIONAL DIABETES (GDM) - GDM is like type 2 diabetes. It is called gestational diabetes because it is discovered during pregnancy. GDM occurs when the placenta makes high levels of substances (hormones) that block the body’s ability to use its own insulin well. The result is a need for the woman’s body to make more insulin than usual to get sugar into the cells and out of the blood stream. Some women can not make more insulin when there are high levels of hormones in the blood stream (after about 24 weeks of pregnancy). For these women, sugar stays in the blood stream in an amount that is higher than normal. When the mother’s blood sugar is high, this extra sugar goes directly to the baby. But, the mother’s insulin can not. The extra sugar that goes to the baby causes the baby to make a lot more of it’s own insulin than it should to use up that sugar. Now the baby has extra sugar AND extra insulin. Insulin takes the extra sugar and makes it into fat. The fat made in this way is deposited around the baby’s belly and shoulders causing macrosomia (see MACROSOMIA on page 29). Later in the baby’s life it can lead to central obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes - also known as Metabolic Syndrome. See page 4 in this booklet for more information.

GLUCOSE - A form of sugar which is used by the body for energy and comes from food.
GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST - The lab test done to diagnose gestational diabetes and diabetes after the baby is delivered. This test is done in a lab and requires the women to drink a sweet liquid.

HORMONES - Chemicals produced by different organs in the body. Each hormone has a specific body function (job) such as growing, pregnancy, and defending the body.

HYPERGLYCEMIA - Blood sugars above normal. High blood sugars are harmful to the mother and baby. The normal blood sugar levels in pregnancy vary with the time of day and if before or after meals.

HYPOGLYCEMIA - Low blood sugar of varying severity, usually defined as less than 70 during pregnancy. In the nonpregnant state, low blood sugar is usually anything less than 50 - 60. Low blood sugar is harmful to the mother and baby and must be avoided. Regular meals, snacks, exercise and use of medication or insulin will help prevent low blood sugars.

INTRAUTERINE GROWTH RESTRICTION (IUGR) - IUGR occurs when a baby does not grow at a normal rate inside the mother and has a birth weight less than 10 percent of the weight of other babies that age. These babies may have a high risk of diabetes later in life.

INSULIN - Insulin is a hormone made by the pancreas. Insulin lowers blood sugar and allows for the use of sugar for energy.

JAUNDICE - Most newborns normally have some yellow tinge to their skin from the second to fifth day after birth. This is caused by a build up of bilirubin (the yellow substance) under the skin. This happens because the newborn can not yet get rid of bilirubin. Bilirubin results when red blood cells the newborn no longer needs breakdown. If the yellow tinge is severe or it lasts a long time, it must be treated to prevent complications.

MACROSOMIA - Refers to a baby whose belly and shoulders have more fat than the average baby. Often, these babies weigh more than 9 pounds at term (40 weeks). Macrosomia at birth may be associated with low blood sugar for the baby after birth. During delivery there can be physical injury to the baby's face, shoulders and collar bone. Later in life there can be health problems with high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and abnormal fats.

PLACENTA - The organ that attaches to the inside wall of the uterus. This organ provides a blood supply and nutrients from the mother to the unborn baby.
PRETERM BIRTH - Birth of the baby before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy. Women with diabetes may experience delivery before full term (40 weeks) due to complications of diabetes.

REGISTERED DIETITIAN - A Registered Dietitian (also referred to as “RD”) is an expert on: food, your body's need for nutrients, and how you should eat when you have medical problems. The RD can help you choose the best foods and meal plan to help you and your baby stay healthy.

STILLBIRTH - When a baby dies after the 20th week of pregnancy and before delivery. The exact cause is not known, but some are associated with sugars in the mother’s blood that are out of control.

TYPE I DIABETES - Autoimmune disease in which the body no longer makes insulin (a substance needed to help our cells use sugar). Insulin must always be injected to use the sugar in the blood stream. The cause is not exactly known.

TYPE 2 DIABETES - Type 2 diabetes happens when the insulin that the body makes can not be used correctly by the cells. People with type 2 diabetes also build up a lot of sugar in their blood. Exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, and making proper food choices are needed to keep blood sugar levels normal. Pills that make insulin work better or cause the body make more insulin may be needed. Some people need to take insulin injections.

UTERUS - The organ (also called the womb) where the unborn baby grows.