

Baby & Me Program Now at OMG

By Renee Hansen, CNM

Baby & Me - Tobacco Free is a national program begun by Laurie Adams of Jamestown, New York, in 2002 and as of March 2014, Olean Medical Group is able to offer it to our patients. It is a smoking cessation program created to reduce the tobacco use by pregnant and post-partum women and it comes with rewards – a healthier baby and free diapers for up to 12 months.

I am very pleased to report that I and one of our registered nurses are certified to participate in the program. The Baby & Me program is open to any of our pregnant mothers who wish to participate and it is relatively simple because it is incorporated into the patient's monthly visits.

At the patient's first visit, she will receive information about the program. In the coming months, there will be at least four prenatal cessation counseling sessions and carbon monoxide monitoring. To verify carbon monoxide monitor test results, we may conduct a random saliva test.

Carbon monoxide monitoring will continue once the baby is born and if the mother remains smoke-free, she receives a \$25 monthly voucher for diapers for up to 6 – 12 months postpartum, depending on program funding. The voucher may be used at Walmart or any other participating stores. Diapers can be a costly expense and this program can pay for a large portion of them.

Studies have indicated that those who quit smoking are less likely to have premature and low-birth weight babies. Quitting smoking also greatly reduces the effects of secondhand smoke on their children. Overall, the national Baby & Me program indicates a significant decrease of women who smoke during and after their pregnancies and the end result is healthier moms and much healthier babies.

Our goal at Olean Medical Group is to help all pregnant women who are interested in quitting smoking. I welcome you to call me if you have questions regarding Baby & Me-Tobacco Free, at 716-376-2251.