

Empathy Belly Simulation CDG Questions: (See clinical schedule)

Students will wear the Empathy Belly Pregnancy Simulator for a total of 5 hours. The first 3 hours will be with just the Empathy Belly. The final 2 hours the student will wear the Empathy Belly with the additional components (bladder weight, chest restrictor, and two ball weights). Throughout the simulation the student should engage in everyday activities. While wearing the Empathy Belly the student will need to take a picture of themselves. The student should complete a minimum of four of the following tasks, as well as, go somewhere public while wearing the Empathy Belly. Some options for going out in public include: grocery shopping, out to eat, visit at a friend or family members home, etc.

Tasks:

- **Walk up a flight of stairs**
- **Put on tie shoes**
- **Walk briskly for 15 minutes**
- **Lay down flat, get to a sitting position, and then stand up**
- **Do laundry**
- **Do dishes/Load dishwasher**
- **Vacuum/Sweep/Mop the floor**
- **Drive/Get in and out of a vehicle**
- **Pretend to shave your legs**

Each student is to answer a set of self-reflection questions and submit them in the online discussion area of the Maternal Child Nursing Course and attach the photo(s) of themselves wearing the Empathy Belly. The self-reflection questions account for 1 hour of simulation. The empathy belly simulator is available to sign out on your scheduled day from the administrative assistant – and will need to be returned within 24 hours. You will be expected to wear the provided t-shirt over your cloths before your put on the empathy belly. The empathy belly will be sanitized in between students. The Empathy Belly Simulator is school property. If the simulator is **abused, damaged, or lost** while in your care, you will be responsible for replacing the specific item(s) that are abused, damaged, or lost. This assignment counts as 6 hours of simulation time (5 hours simulation, 1-hour reflection responses). The assignment is due on **Friday by 0800.**

1. Describe how you felt physically and emotionally when you put the belly on. What surprised you the most?

When I first put on the empathy belly, I felt heavy and weighed down. There was a lot of pressure on my stomach and back. It was tiring to stand upright and move comfortably. Emotionally, I realized that motion became limited, which made me frustrated. What surprised me the most was how my balance and breathing were affected as soon as I put on the empathy belly.

2. How did you feel about yourself when you had the belly on?

When I had the belly on, I felt more self-conscious about my body and how I moved. My normal posture, in the way I walked, changed and I became more aware of simple tasks that I usually

took for granted. It made me realize what pregnant women experience with their self-image and comfort.

3. Where did you go out in public while wearing the belly? How did you feel going out into public wearing the belly?

I went to the grocery store while wearing the empty belly. Going out in public felt awkward at first because I was worried about how people would look at me. After a while I just focused on getting through the trip since it made walking more difficult.

4. How did others react to you when you had the belly on?

People looked at me oddly because it didn't look natural. One person offered to get out of the way in an aisle for me. This made me realize how pregnant women may get judgment from strangers.

5. What tasks did you choose to complete? How did you feel completing each of the tasks you choose?

I tried tying my shoes, vacuuming, doing laundry, and getting in and out of a vehicle. Tying my shoes was the hardest because I couldn't bend at the waist as well. Vacuuming felt exhausting and made my back hurt. Doing laundry was awkward because I had to bend and squat. Getting in out of the car was uncomfortable and I had to do it slow. All these tasks showed me how daily chores can be a lot for a pregnant woman.

6. How complex was it to complete your everyday activities with the belly on?

Everyday activities became difficult and tiring. Even basic tasks made me think of how I can do it differently. This helped me better understand how pregnant women have physical limitations which can affect their daily independence.

7. Describe what you felt or experienced during the simulation in each of the areas below:
What medical history, social history, and cultural history may impact these areas and how?

- a. Weight you felt: Heavy abdominal weight strained my back. Medical history of back pain or obesity could worsen these pains.

- b. Weight on bladder: Frequent urge to urinate. History of urinary issues, like UTIs, could make the woman have trouble urinating or have more frequent urges.

- c. Pressure on lungs: I noticed I was short of breath. Conditions like asthma could make this dangerous because a woman could have an asthma attack.

- d. Change in your posture & center of gravity: Leaning back strained my back and made me unstable. A history of falls or musculoskeletal disorders could increase risks of falls.

e. Fetal movement (movement of weights and/or water): The shifting simulated kicks were distracting. Cultural beliefs about pregnancy movement could influence how this is perceived.

f. Breast enlargement and protruding profile: This made my body image feel different. Cultural views on body changes during pregnancy could affect the woman's self-esteem.

8. How did your sensitivity, empathy, or understanding of pregnancy change throughout this assignment? How does this impact the way you will care for the pregnant population?

Using the empathy belly made me empathize for the physical and emotional challenges the pregnant women face. Experiencing these limitations myself made me appreciate how resilient pregnant women are. As a nurse I will be more mindful of their physical limitations and offer support for them emotionally. I will make sure to advocate for their comfort and safety.