



## Have a Fabulous Pregnancy!

By Kadidja Hinds, BET.com Staff Writer

**Posted May 4, 2007** -- "How do I avoid stretch marks?" "What challenges will I face during pregnancy?" "Will I ever get any sleep?"

You're in luck. Just in time for Mother's Day, Kimberly Seals Allers, author of "The Mocha Manual," combines two of her favorite things, motherhood and writing, to bring you the first in a series of books designed to help Black women successfully navigate maternity and beyond. Here, she shares some of her fondest (and not so fond) memories of enduring 40 weeks of pregnancy, answers burning questions and provides tips for new moms and Mother's Day gift ideas.

**Kimberly is the mother of a 5-year-old daughter and 19-month-old son. Here's some of her story.**

The first year of your first child is always the toughest. You're a new mom, so you're constantly second-guessing yourself. There's not one difficult year. Each stage brings different challenges

Boys are more physically demanding. He has to jump, destroy and run. I can give my daughter a tea set and she'll be set. On the other hand, boys don't have the same emotional drama that girls do.

**Kimberly shares the joys and challenges of pregnancy.**

I used to think getting stabbed in the back was a bad thing, but then I had an epidural.

### JOYS

- Pregnancy boobs
- Pampering yourself  
"After the baby comes, nobody cares about you. Nine months go by quickly, so take advantage of it."
- Bringing life into the world.  
"It's so humbling. It's the greatest thing. It's like, 'I am

- You eat well and no one can say too much too you.
- You can access this world of mothers.  
"You're stepping into this new world, and you're able to connect with women in a whole 'nother way."

### **CHALLENGES**

- Hormones can be really intense. It's a constant up and down.
- Your body is carrying more, so it can cause some discomfort.
- Managing stress during that time is a challenge. Black women have to put aside the "super-woman syndrome" complex.

### **Kimberly answers 3 frequently asked questions.**

#### **Question: Can I perm my hair?**

**Answer:** There haven't been any studies to prove that's not safe. However, I'd try to go early in the morning to avoid peak times at the salon, so you'll be less accessible to fumes.

#### **Question: How do I avoid stretch marks?**

**Answer:** Doctors will say you can't avoid stretch marks and that it's genetic. But, I greased up my skin like a chicken with olive oil and shea butter and it worked. I have no stretch marks.

#### **Question: How do I avoid my boobs sagging?**

**Answer:** Your breasts will never be the same again. It's a wrap.

### **Kimberly shares some motherly advice.**

Motherhood is a challenge, whether you have a partner or not. Get help. Build your own support network. When I was first pregnant, I was single, and I really had to learn to ask for help. Also, learn to set new boundaries with loved ones, friends, whoever, so you clear some space for parenting. Lastly, have confidence that you can do it.

A good mom encourages her children and ensures them that they can be all they can be.

A good mom sets high expectations and involves her children in social activities to teach them how to balance life with culture. Good mothers preserve their innocence and instill the importance of education.

For Mother's Day, I'm big on moms getting a day off to spend the day pampering themselves. Or, try to help her reconnect with her previous self because sometimes the woman she was before she was a mother gets lost.

**See more gift ideas at [mochamanual.com](http://mochamanual.com) and enter to win a free Mocha Manual baby shower!**