

# Monitoring cuts diabetic pregnancy

Diabetic women are three times as likely as non-diabetic women to have a child with birth defects but preliminary results from the University of Washington (UW) Diabetes in Pregnancy Project suggest that careful monitoring of blood sugar early in pregnancy may reduce the risks.

The diabetes in Pregnancy Project, initially funded for three years in 1980, has received additional funding until 1985 and is open to women in Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana and Oregon.

Before the discovery of in-

sulin in the 1920s, pregnancy for diabetic women meant, at best serious illness and, most probably, death for mother and child. The complications are now greatly reduced, doctors report, and the prospects of delivering a health baby are excellent, but the risks of birth defects still remain.

The Diabetes in Pregnancy Project was founded on the hypothesis that early and careful diabetic control may reduce the incidence of birth defects. Women who are currently taking insulin and who are considering pregnancy in the next

two years may participate in the program.

Medical services of the project will not be denied on the basis of a patient's inability to pay. Diabetic women are offered pre-conception counseling, early diagnosis of pregnancy and complete medical evaluation after pregnancy is confirmed. The diabetic woman will learn to monitor her blood glucose at home and the project provides all glucose monitoring supplies.

For more information call (206)223-3046 or, toll free in Washington 1-800-542-7709.