

# *Your Baby & Your Body*



A Trimester-by-Trimester guide to the  
changes and growth of both of you

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# Introduction



## You're Pregnant!

You have begun on an exciting journey – growing a new human being inside of you! One of the most amazing parts of this journey is that your body has all of the DNA information it needs to grow this baby as well as adapt your body to all the changes of doing that. Pregnancy can bring a lot of visible and invisible changes to your growing body. This booklet will give you a little peek into some of the big changes in your body as well as the growth of your new baby.

## Booklet Outline:

This booklet is divided into 3 sections – each section a trimester of your pregnancy. You and your baby each have your own page, describing physical and emotional changes in you as the mother, and key developmental milestones and “accomplishments” of your unborn baby.



# Your 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester

Your 1<sup>st</sup> trimester begins on the first day of your last menstrual period and ends after your 12<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.



*Words that could describe these weeks for you. . .*

New ~ Overjoyed ~ Different ~ Exciting ~ Emotional ~ Surprised ~ Changes

## *Physical Changes -*

- Occasional headaches, due to fluctuating hormones, are not uncommon in early pregnancy.
- Fatigue in early pregnancy is normal, this is also due to elevated hormone levels.
- You may feel faint at times. This is a normal occurrence connected to your increasing blood volume.
- Your heart will be pumping out a lot more blood now that you are pregnant. It will increase by 30-50%, most of this in your first trimester! Your pulse will also be higher, about 15 more beats per minute.
- You may have noticed by now that you have to go the bathroom more frequently as your enlarging uterus puts pressure on your bladder. Constipation can also be common in the first trimester, as your uterus places pressure on your colon as well.
- The effect of estrogen on your tissues can cause changes such as your gums bleeding easier, or nosebleeds. These are normal changes of pregnancy.
- You will notice changes beginning in your breasts during this trimester. They will begin to grow in size, your areola will become darker, and your breasts may feel tender or painful.

(Coad, 2012) (Davis, 2012) (Varney, 2015)

## *How You Might Be Feeling -*

- Initially, you may feel shock or overjoyed excitement at learning you are pregnant! The feeling of this baby being “yours” will continue to become more and more real to you.
- You may feel discouraged or frustrated, particularly if you are a highly active person, at the normal changes occurring in your body during your first trimester. Remind yourself that the fatigue, nausea, and loss of muscle tone that you may experience is normal and is your body responding to growing a baby. (Davis, 2012)
- You may be facing anxiety regarding being a mother (for the first time, or yet again), be facing pressures regarding health or financial concerns, be anxious about having a miscarriage or doing something that would harm your tiny baby. These are all normal feelings that many other mothers are feeling with you.
- The hormones of pregnancy can cause you to feel emotional over things that before you felt you handled well. Tears can come much quicker for you. This, too, is normal and expected.



# Your Baby's First Trimester

## 1 to 12 Weeks

During your first trimester, your baby is experiencing rapid growth and changes. He or she goes from being a miniscule cell to a tiny baby with recognizable features during this trimester!

*Special changes during this trimester include:*

- The heart starts to beat around the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> week
- The brain and eyes start to develop during the 7<sup>th</sup> week
- The nose, mouth and palate begin to form in the 8<sup>th</sup> week
- By the end of your first trimester, your baby is able to swallow, urinate, and open and shut his or her mouth.

(Davis, 2012)

By the time your baby is 8 weeks old, he or she has 90% of the structures found in adults!

### *Weeks 1 to 4: the “secret” baby...*

Many women discover they are pregnant during weeks 3-6. A lot of amazing things have already happened during this time! You have your last menstrual period, during which the egg which will become your baby is ripening. It is then released, fertilized, continues traveling down your fallopian tube and implants in the wall of your uterus. The fertilized egg rapidly begins development by dividing into many, many cells. The cells which will become your baby's placenta begin to separate and develop. By the time that you have missed your period, noticed some early pregnancy symptoms and taken a positive pregnancy test, your new baby is already well on the way to developing all of its major structures and organ systems.





# Your 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester

13 to 28 Weeks

*Words that might describe these weeks for you. . .*

Energetic ~ Happy ~ Blossoming ~ Active ~ Smooth ~ Carefree

## *Physical Changes –*

- You will feel your baby move for the first time during this trimester! You can generally expect this anywhere from 15 to 20 weeks. No one else will be able to feel the baby's movements at first, but you will!
- Your appetite may begin to climb in the middle of this trimester as your baby starts to get larger.
- Some of the challenges you experienced in your first trimester such as nausea and fatigue may subside.
- You may experience some increased vaginal discharge during this trimester. As long as there are no accompanying symptoms such as itching or a foul odour, this is completely normal.
- You will continue to notice changes in your breasts, such as darkening areolas and small amounts of colostrum that may secrete from your nipples.
- You may begin to feel "Braxton Hicks" contractions, sometimes as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> week. These are toning contractions for your uterus and are completely normal. (Frye, 2013)

## *How You Might Be Feeling -*

- This may be a period of radiance for you after attaining some relief from the symptoms of fatigue and nausea that you experienced earlier.
- As you feel your baby move, you will continue to experience more and more the distinctness of the life inside of you and your own sense of mothering towards your child. Your relationship with your own mother may change as you consider how you were mothered and what you want to emulate in that. These feelings are normal, especially if you are a first-time mother, as you are moving from being a care receiver to a care giver.
- You are able to find out the gender of your baby during this trimester if you wish. Your baby will continue to become more "real" to you as you consider details of picking out names, or clothes for your baby.
- As your pregnancy progresses, you will continue to consider letting go of life "as it is", and the changing of your one-on-one relationship with your husband, or the shifting of relationships with your children to add another child to the family. These are good and normal feelings to experience. (Frye, 2013)



# Your Baby's Second Trimester

13 to 28 weeks



Your baby will reach several special milestones during this trimester, and continue to become more and more real to you each day!

*Special changes during this trimester include:*

- External genitalia becoming recognizable – you can now have an ultrasound to reveal your baby's gender if you'd like! (16-22 weeks).
- Your baby will begin to have eye movements. First slow (13-16 weeks) then rapid (21-25 weeks). Eyes will be open at 26-29 weeks.
- Fingernails will be present, followed by toenails soon after.
- Your baby's limbs will reach mature proportions (17-20 weeks).
- Body fat will begin to develop on your baby, smoothing out some of the wrinkles on the skin.
- By this time your baby will be able to hear your voice, and soon after other noises and the voices of others. (20+ weeks). At 24 weeks, your baby can respond to noise.

(Coad, 2012)

## *Premature Babies*

In the case that your baby was born prematurely, survival outside the womb is possible between 22-25 weeks with very high-tech care. (Frye, 2013)

The odds of baby's well-being increase with each week that your baby remains inside your womb. Survival is usual from 32+ weeks.





# Your 3rd Trimester

## 28 to 40 Weeks

*Words that might describe these weeks for you. . .*

Happy ~ Exhausted ~ Anticipation ~ Heavy ~ Waiting ~ Exhilaration ~ Nervous

### *Physical Changes -*

- By now, your uterus has increased to 5 times its normal size.
- Your blood and plasma volume has increased by 50% to 60% throughout this pregnancy, reaching peak volume around 28 – 30 weeks. You will want to continue drinking a lot of good water and healthy juices to keep up with additional fluid stores and also help protect against hemorrhage at the time of birth.
- As your growing baby continues to “compact” your stomach and other surrounding organs, you may find it more comfortable to eat numerous “smaller” meals throughout the day in place of 2-3 larger meals. Strive to continue good nutrition!
- As your baby continues to grow, you may feel heavy, clumsy, or that you have to move very slowly and deliberately. Remember that this is normal and that the joy of soon having your baby will far outweigh these uncomfortable symptoms which will soon only be a distant memory!
- Gradual softening of muscles & ligaments will increase during your last trimester due to hormones and preparation for labor. Vaginal discharge may also increase and thicken.  
(Frye, 2013) (Varney, 2015) (Parker, 1998) (Coad, 2012)

### *How You Might Be Feeling -*

- You will be finalizing your plans for the birth of your baby and considering who all will be present and what you desire your birth to look like.
- You may have some feelings of anxiety about the upcoming birth, mixed with excitement and anticipation! These feelings are totally normal. It may help to talk through your fears with your husband, a good friend, or your midwife.
- You might want to consider taking a childbirth class during this time. This will continue to prepare you for labor and birth, as well as breastfeeding and bonding with your baby.
- Towards the end of your pregnancy, you might feel a desire to “nest” or prepare yourself and your home for the arrival of a new child. Tackle any house projects, freezer cooking, deep cleaning or the like at a wise pace and consider enlisting some help!



# Your Baby's 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester

## 28 to 40 Weeks



The third trimester prepares your baby to live outside the uterus. Your baby's organs and body systems mature, and its weight is greatly increasing at this time. Your baby will weigh around 2 pounds at 28 weeks and anywhere from 6-11 pounds at birth!

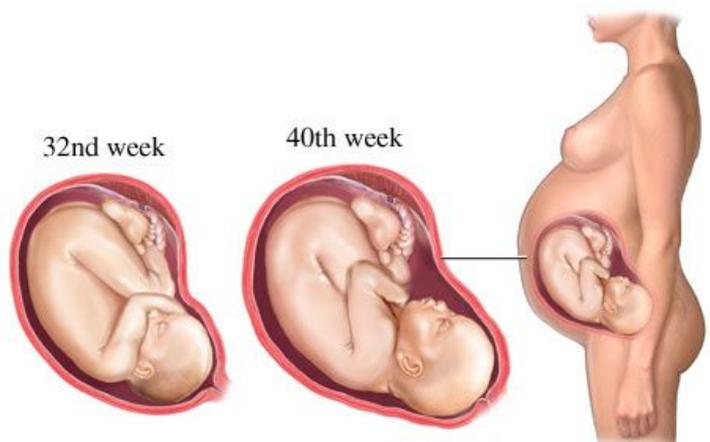
*Special changes during this trimester include:*

- Your baby will be increasingly easy for your midwife to "palpate" (feeling body parts to determine baby's position) and its heartbeat will become even easier to find and hear during this time.
- Your baby will likely be head down by 33 weeks or so, if not, your midwife can suggest some things to help baby start moving that way.
- By 30 weeks your baby's pupils will begin to respond to the light which filters through your skin and uterus.
- Your baby will probably weigh at least 4.5 pounds by 31 weeks. Fetal growth is greatly accelerated during this time as your baby develops fat layers. These layers will help your baby stay warm after birth.
- By 36 weeks, most babies' lungs are mature enough to breathe room air without any problems.

(Frye, 2013)

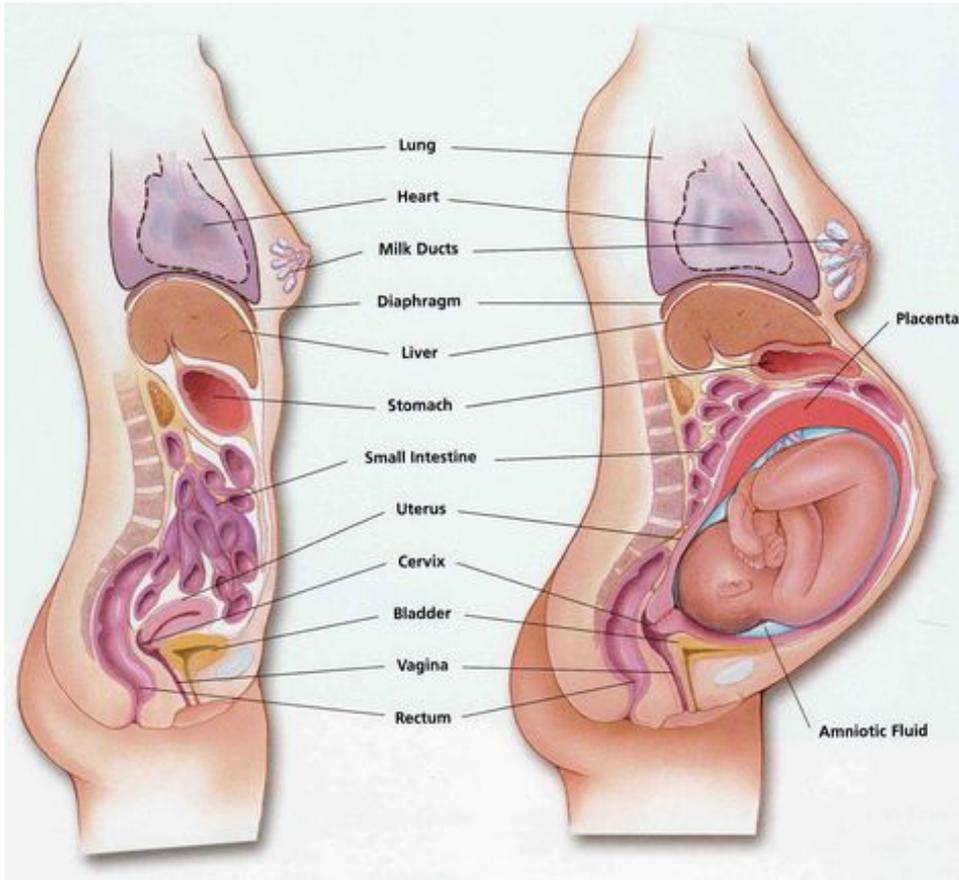
## *Fetal Movement*

You will notice your baby's movements changing as your pregnancy progresses and baby grows bigger and has less space to move. Kicking, stretching and aggressive limb movements will become more gentle, rolling, shifting movements. The important thing to notice is that it is the *quality* of movements changing, not the *quantity*. Let your midwife know if the frequency of your baby's activity level changes noticeably.

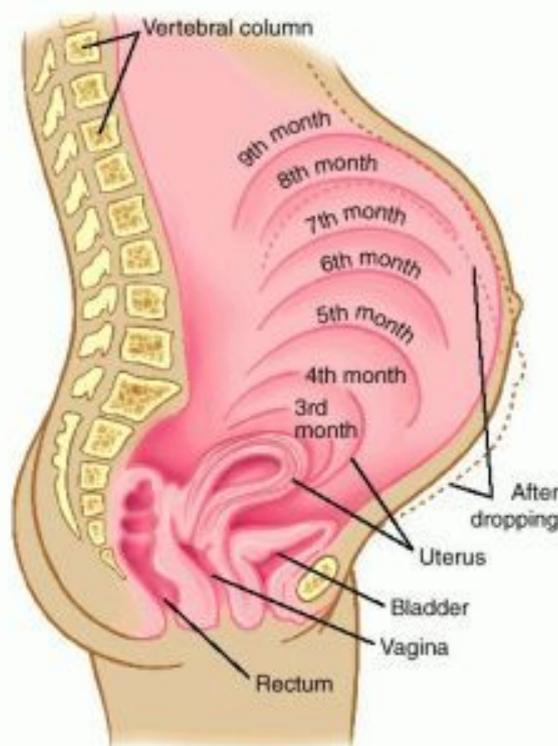


# How Your Body Has Changed

*A Summary of Growing a Life*



Many changes have happened in your body as you've grown this baby. Others have seen those changes from the outside, you've *felt* them from the inside. The accompanying illustrations on this page can help give a visual picture of the impact of the changes you are physically feeling the effects of!



# The Growth of a Life

*"How lovely is the silence of growing things"*

Your baby has been on an incredible journey from conception until birth. A fun way to visualize the approximate size of your baby is through fruits and vegetables. Below is a chart to help you follow the growth of your baby.



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