

# Stages of pregnancy

## Adapting to Pregnancy: First Trimester



As your body adjusts, you may have to change or limit your daily activities. You'll need more rest. You may also need to use the energy you have more wisely.

### Your changing body

Almost every part of your body is affected as you adapt to pregnancy. The uterus and cervix will begin to soften right away. You may not look very pregnant during the first 3 months. But you are likely to have some common signs of early pregnancy:

- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Frequent urination
- Mood swings
- Bloating of the belly
- Constipation
- Heartburn
- Missed or light periods (first trimester bleeding)

- Nipple or breast tenderness and breast swelling

### **It's not too late to start good habits**

What matters most is protecting your baby from this moment on. If you smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs, now is the time to stop. If you need help, talk with your healthcare provider:

- Smoking increases the risk of stillbirth or having a low-birth-weight baby. If you smoke, quit now.
- Alcohol and drugs have been linked with miscarriage, birth defects, intellectual disability, and low birth weight. Do not drink alcohol or take drugs.

### **Tips to relieve nausea**

Although nausea can happen at any time of the day, it may be worse in the morning. To help prevent nausea:

- Eat small, light meals at frequent intervals.
- Drink fluids often.
- Get up slowly. Eat a few unsalted crackers before you get out of bed.
- Avoid smells that bother you.
- Avoid spicy and fatty foods.
- Eat an ice pop in your favorite flavor.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Ask your healthcare provider about taking ginger or vitamin B6 for nausea and vomiting.
- Talk with your healthcare provider if you take vitamins that upset your stomach.

### **Work concerns**

The end of the first trimester is a good time to discuss working during pregnancy with your employer. Follow your healthcare provider's advice if your job needs you to stand for a long time, work with hazardous tools, or even sit at a desk all day. Your workspace, workload, or scheduled hours may need to be adjusted. Perhaps you can change body postures more often or take an extra break.

### **Advice for travel**

Talk to your healthcare provider first, but the second trimester may be the best time for any travel. You may be advised to avoid certain trips while you're pregnant. Food and water can be concerns in developing countries. Travel by car is a good choice, as you can stop, get out, and

stretch. Bring snacks and water along. Fasten the lap belt below your belly, low over your hips. Also be sure to wear the shoulder harness.

### **Intimacy**

Unless your healthcare provider tells you to, there is no reason to stop having sex while you're pregnant. You or your partner may notice changes in desire. Desire may be less in the first trimester, due to nausea and fatigue. In the second trimester, sex may be very enjoyable. The third trimester can be a challenge comfort-wise. Try different positions and see what's best for you both.

### **Adapting to Pregnancy: Second Trimester**



Keep up the healthy habits you started in your first trimester. You might be a little more tired than normal. So plan your day wisely. Look at the tips below and choose the ones that suit your lifestyle.

**If you have any questions, check with your healthcare provider.**

## **If you work**

If you can, adjust your work with your employer to fit your needs. Try these tips:

- If you stand for long periods, find ways to do some tasks while sitting. Also, try to stand with 1 foot resting on a low stool or ledge. Shift your weight from foot to foot often. Wear low-heeled shoes.
- If you sit, keep your knees level with your hips. Rest your feet on a firm surface. Sit tall with support for your low back.
- If you work long hours, ask about adjusting your schedule. Try taking shorter breaks more often.

## **When you travel**

The second trimester may be the best time for any travel. Talk to your healthcare provider about any special plans you may need to make. Always:

- Wear a seat belt. Fasten the lap part under your belly. Wear the shoulder part also.
- Take breaks often during long trips by car or plane. Move around to stretch your legs.
- Drink plenty of fluids on flights. The air in plane cabins is very dry.
- Avoid hot climates or high altitudes if you are not used to them.
- Avoid places where the food and water might make you sick.
- Make sure you are up-to-date on all immunizations, including the flu vaccine. This is especially important when traveling overseas.

## **Taking time to relax**

Find time to rest and relax at work or at home:

- Take short time-outs daily. Do relaxation exercises.
- Breathe deeply during stressful times.
- Try not to take on too much. Plan tasks for times when you have the most energy.
- Take naps when you can. Or just sit and relax.
- After week 16, avoid lying on your back for more than a few minutes. Instead, lie on your side. Switch sides often.

## **Continuing as lovers**

Unless your healthcare provider tells you otherwise, there is no reason to stop having sex now. Blood supply increases to the pelvic area in the second trimester. Because of this, sex might be more enjoyable. Try different positions and see what's best. Also, talk to your partner about any changes in desire. Spotting may happen after sex. Be sure to let your healthcare provider know if there is heavy bleeding.

## **Keeping your environment safe**

You can still clean house and use scented products. Just take some simple precautions:

- Wear gloves when using cleaning fluids.
- Open windows to let in fresh air. Use a fan if you paint.
- Avoid secondhand smoke.
- Don't breathe fumes from nail polish, hair spray, cleansers, or other chemicals.

## **Adapting to Pregnancy: Third Trimester**



Although common during pregnancy, some discomforts may seem worse in the final weeks. Simple lifestyle changes can help. Take care of yourself. And ask your partner to help out with small tasks.

## **Limiting leg problems**

Ways to combat leg issues:

- Wear support hose all day.
- Avoid snug shoes and clothes that bind, like tight pants and socks with elastic tops.
- Sit with your feet and legs raised often.

## **Caring for your breasts**

Tips to follow include:

- Wash with plain water. Avoid using harsh soaps or rubbing alcohol. They may cause dryness.
- Wear a nursing bra for extra support. It can also hide any leaks from your nipples.

## **Controlling hemorrhoids**

Ways to avoid hemorrhoids include:

- Eat foods that are high in fiber. Also, exercise and drink enough fluids. This will reduce constipation and hemorrhoids.
- Sleep and nap on your side. This limits pressure on the veins of your rectum.
- Try not to stand or sit for long periods.

## **Controlling back pain**

As your body changes during pregnancy, your back must work in new ways. Back pain is due to many causes. Physical changes in your body can strain your back and its supporting muscles. Also, hormones (chemicals that carry messages throughout the body) increase during pregnancy. This can affect how your muscles and joints work together. All of these changes can lead to pain. Pain may be felt in the upper or lower back. Pain is also common in the pelvis. Some pregnant women have sciatica. This is pain caused by pressure on the sciatic nerve running down the back of the leg. Ask your healthcare provider for specific tips and exercises to help control your back pain.

## **Tips to help you rest**

Good rest and sleep will help you feel better. Here are some ideas:

- Ask your partner to massage your shoulders, neck, or back.
- Limit the errands you do each day.
- Lie down in the afternoon or after work for a few minutes.
- Take a warm bath before you go to sleep.

- Drink warm milk or teas without caffeine.
- Avoid coffee, black tea, and cola.

### **Stopping heartburn**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid spicy, greasy, fried, or acidic foods.</li><li>• Eat small amounts more often. Eat slowly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wait 2 hours after eating before lying down.</li><li>• Sleep with your upper body raised 6 inches.</li></ul>
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### **Managing mood swings**

Ways to manage mood swings include:

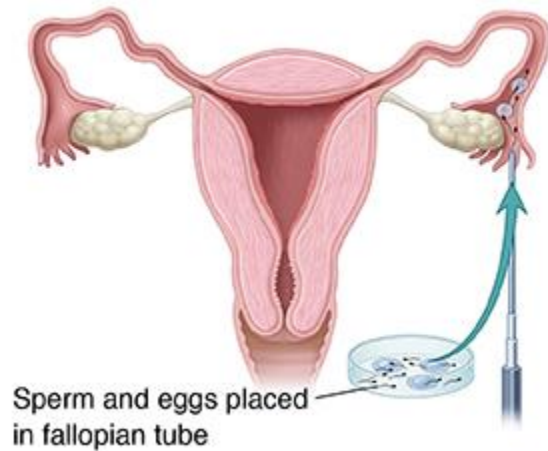
- Know that mood changes are normal.
- Exercise often but get plenty of rest.
- Address any concerns and limit stress. Talking to your partner, other women, or your healthcare provider may help.

### **Dealing with urinary frequency**

Tips to deal with having to urinate often include:

- Drink plenty of water all day. If you drink a lot in the evening, though, you may have to get up more in the night.
- Limit coffee, black tea, and cola.

## **GIFT/ZIFT**



**With GIFT, sperm and eggs are placed in a fallopian tube to allow fertilization in the natural site. The woman must have at least one normal, open fallopian tube.**

Gamete intrafallopian transfer (GIFT) and zygote intrafallopian transfer (ZIFT) are 2 methods used to help a woman become pregnant. With GIFT, sperm and eggs are put in the fallopian tube. With ZIFT, the sperm and egg are first combined in a lab. Then a fertilized egg is put into the fallopian tube.

### **Why GIFT and ZIFT are used**

GIFT and ZIFT can help produce a pregnancy when some health problems are present. These include:

- Mild endometriosis and sperm antibodies in a woman
- Low sperm production in a man
- Unexplained infertility

### **Getting ready for GIFT or ZIFT**

- Medicine is used to stimulate the ovaries. This causes them to make many mature eggs.
- The eggs are removed from the ovaries with a thin needle. This is typically done through the vagina.

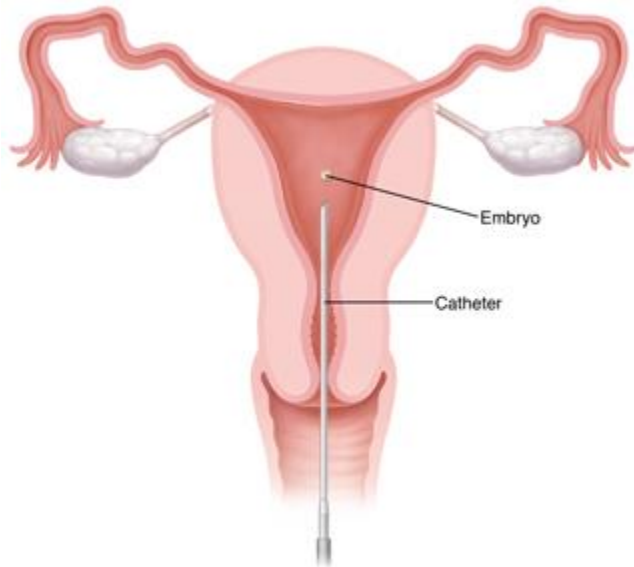
### **Hormone treatment with GIFT or ZIFT**

GIFT or ZIFT may be used along with hormone treatment. This can improve the chance of a pregnancy. Your healthcare provider can talk with you about the details, success rates, and costs.



## **In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)**

For some fertility problems, your healthcare provider may recommend in vitro fertilization. During IVF, sperm and egg are combined outside the body in a lab. A fertilized egg (embryo) is then placed in the uterus to grow. In most cases, IVF is done using hormone medicines to increase the chances of success. Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider about the details, success rates, and costs of this procedure.



### **How IVF works**

There are 4 main steps during IVF:

- Hormone medicine is used to stimulate the ovaries to produce multiple mature eggs.
- The mature eggs are retrieved from the ovaries. This is done by guiding a thin needle through the vagina with the help of ultrasound. You will be given medicine (sedation) so you won't feel pain.
- Sperm are combined with the eggs in a lab. If there are problems with fertilization, one sperm can be injected directly into an egg. This process is called intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI).
- A few days after fertilization, one or more embryos are placed into the uterus. For many women, the chance of pregnancy with transfer of one embryo is excellent and reduces the risk of a multiple pregnancy. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine has made recommendations for the number of embryos to transfer. This is based on a woman's age and quality of embryos.

## Using frozen embryos

Although many embryos are created during an IVF cycle, only a certain number are placed in the uterus. The rest may be frozen for later use. This prevents the woman from having to go through another cycle of egg stimulation and retrieval. It is also less costly.

## Pregnancy: Body Changes

From **conception** (fertilization) until after the birth of your child, you and your baby will change every day. To help you understand what is happening, we've outlined how pregnancy begins and some of the changes you may notice.

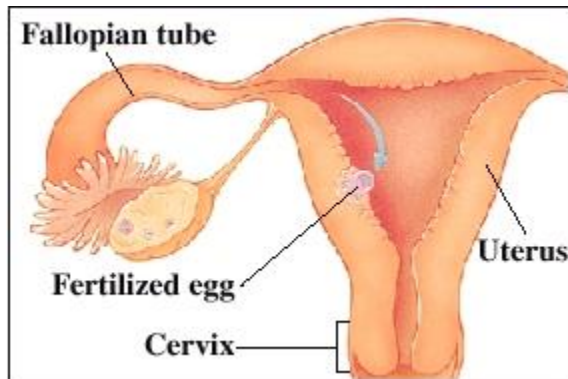


## Your changing body

Pregnancy affects almost every part of your body. You may notice some of the following physical and emotional changes:

- Your uterus expands outward and upward as your baby grows. You may feel pressure on your bladder, stomach, and other organs.
- You may notice skin color changes on your forehead, nose, and cheeks. A dark line may form from your bellybutton down to your pubic area. The skin color around your nipples and thighs may also change.
- Pink stretch marks may appear on your abdomen, breasts, or hips.
- Your hair may seem thicker. You lose less hair during pregnancy.
- You may feel fine 1 day and weepy the next. This is caused by changes in your body, like increased **hormones**. These are chemicals that affect the function of certain organs and also your moods.
- You may experience constipation, hemorrhoids, and/or heartburn.
- You may experience mild shortness of breath.

- Your legs may cramp.
- You may have nausea and vomiting.
- You may experience dizziness, extreme tiredness, and sleep problems.
- You may experience temporary bladder control problems.
- Nose bleeds and nasal stuffiness are common.



**The fertilized egg travels down the fallopian tube and attaches to the uterus.**

### **How pregnancy begins**

Conception is the union of a sperm and an egg. When it happens, your baby's genetic makeup is complete, even its sex. Fertilization takes place in the fallopian tube. The fertilized egg then travels down this tube to the **uterus**(womb). The egg attaches to the lining of the uterus about a week after conception. There it grows and is nourished.

### **Pregnancy: Body Changes**

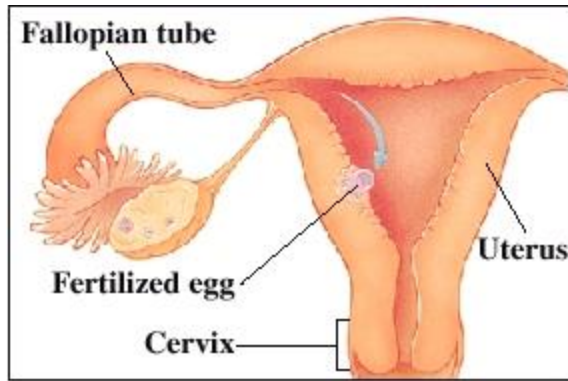
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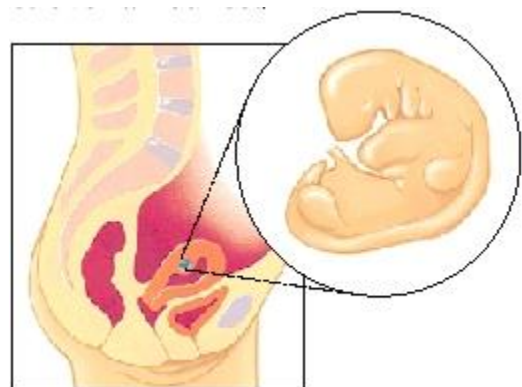
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### **Pregnancy: Your First Trimester Changes**

The first trimester is a time of rapid development for your baby. Because your baby is growing so quickly, it is important that you start a healthy lifestyle right away. By the end of the first trimester, your baby has formed all of its major body organs and weighs just over an ounce.

#### **Month 1 (weeks 1 to 4)**

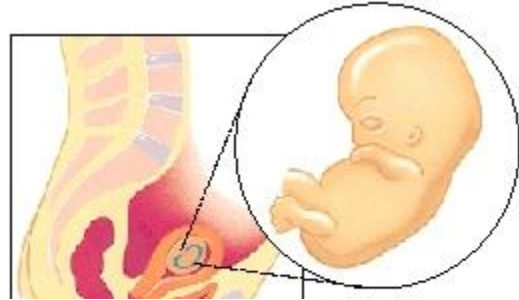
The placenta (the organ that nourishes your baby) begins to form. The brain, spinal cord, heart, gastrointestinal tract, and lungs begin to develop. Your baby is about 1/4-inch long by the end of the first month.



**Actual size of baby is 1/4"**

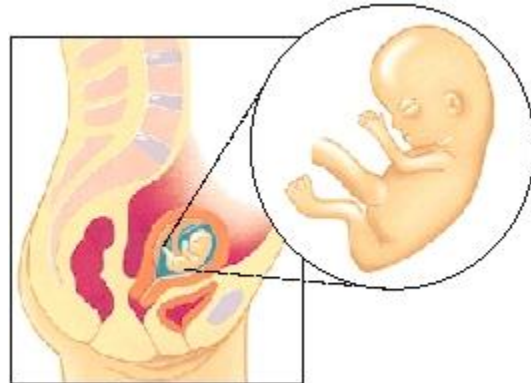
### **Month 2 (weeks 5 to 8)**

All of your baby's major body organs form. The face, fingers, toes, ears, and eyes appear. By the end of the month, your baby is about 1-inch long.



### **Month 3 (weeks 9 to 12)**

Your baby can open and close its fists and mouth. The sexual organs begin to form. As the first trimester ends, your baby is about 3-inches long.



**Actual size of baby is 3"**

## **Pregnancy: Your Second Trimester Changes**

Each day, you and your baby are changing and growing together. Here's a quick look at what's happening to both of you.

### **How you are changing**

Even when you don't notice it, your body is adapting to meet the needs of your growing baby. The changes in your body might also affect your moods.




#### **Your body**

Your uterus expands as baby grows. As the weeks go by, you will feel more pressure on your bladder, stomach, and other organs. You may notice some skin color changes on your forehead, nose, or cheeks. Freckles may darken, and moles may grow. You may notice a darker line on your abdomen between your belly button and pubic bone in the midline.

#### **Your moods**

The second trimester is often easier than the first. Still, be prepared for mood swings. These are due to the increase in **hormones** (chemicals that affect the way organs work) produced by your body. These mood swings are a normal part of pregnancy.

#### **How your baby is growing**

		
<p><b>Month 4</b></p> <p>Baby's heartbeat may be heard with a <b>Doppler</b> (hand-held ultrasound device) by 9 to 10 weeks. Eyebrows, eyelashes, and fingernails begin to form.</p>	<p><b>Month 5</b></p> <p>You may feel your baby move. After a growth spurt, your baby nears 10 inches.</p>	<p><b>Month 6</b></p> <p>Baby's fingerprints have formed. Your baby weighs about 1 to 2 pounds and is about 12 inches long.</p>

### **Pregnancy: Your Third Trimester Changes**




As the baby grows, your body changes too. You may also see signs that your body is getting ready for labor. Be patient. Within a few more weeks, your baby will be born.

#### **How you are changing**

Your body is preparing for the birth of your baby. Some of the most common changes are listed below. If you have any questions or concerns, ask your healthcare provider:

- You'll gain more weight from fluids, extra blood, and fat deposits.
- Your breasts will grow as your body gets ready to feed the baby. They may be more tender. You may also notice a slight yellow or white discharge from the nipples.
- Discharge from your vagina may increase. This is normal.
- You might see some skin color changes on your forehead, cheeks, or nose. Most of these will go away after you deliver.

## How your baby is growing

		
<p><b>Month 7</b></p> <p>Your baby can open and close his or her eyes and weighs around 4 pounds. If born <b>prematurely</b> (too early), your baby would likely survive with special care.</p>	<p><b>Month 8</b></p> <p>Your baby is building up body fat and weighs around 6 pounds.</p>	<p><b>Month 9</b></p> <p>Your baby weighs nearly 7 pounds and is about 19 to 21 inches long. In other words, any day now...</p>

## Preparing for Pregnancy

Even before you become pregnant, your health matters to your future baby. Adopt good health habits today. And take care of any medical problems you have before becoming pregnant.

**Remember:** As soon as you know you are pregnant, get regular prenatal care.

### Things to consider

Read through the list below. The more items that describe you, the healthier you may be:

- I eat a balanced diet.
- I keep physically active.
- I have my health problems under control.
- My weight is about right.
- I don't smoke.



- I don't use recreational drugs.
- I don't have a drinking problem.

Think about the following:

- Who will help you through pregnancy and with childcare?
- Do you have health insurance?
- Do you have the money needed to cover childcare and other day-to-day child expenses?
- Will you be able to take the time you need away from your job for maternity needs and childcare?

### **Adopt a healthy lifestyle**

Each of the following tips can improve your health as you prepare for pregnancy:

- Take folic acid 400 to 800 micrograms or a prenatal vitamin daily.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet.
- Exercise 3 or more times a week and at least 150 minutes weekly.
- Get within 15 pounds of your ideal weight.

The first weeks of pregnancy are the most important time in a baby's development. Before you become pregnant:

- **Don't** use recreational drugs.
- **Don't** drink alcohol.
- **Don't** smoke.
- Get recommended vaccines.

### **Working with your healthcare provider**

Your healthcare provider can help answer any questions you may have. Do you know when to stop taking birth control pills? Are any over-the-counter medicines safe for pregnant women? You can also ask about special care you may need if you have any of the following:

- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), like herpes or chlamydia
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Other chronic health problems

