



Eighth Month

Weeks Thirty-Two to Thirty-Six

YOUR BABY

- ♥ Your baby weighs about 5½ pounds and is about 18 inches long.
 - Rapid brain growth continues.
 - Your baby's eyes are open.
 - Your baby can smile, grimace and react to touch.
 - Its skin is smooth because fat begins to fill out the wrinkles.
 - The downy hair gradually disappears.
 - Your baby is too big to move around much but can kick strongly and roll around.
 - Your baby is active with noticeable patterns of sleep and wakefulness.
 - It may settle into the position for birth.
 - Your baby's body is now mature enough to survive if born early.
 - Your baby gains about 2 pounds this month.
 - Bones of the head are soft and flexible to make it easier to fit through the birth canal.
 - Your baby's lungs may still be immature. If born now or before 37 weeks, your baby is premature but has an excellent chance of survival.

YOUR BODY

- ♥ You may find this month the most uncomfortable and you may become tired easily.
- ♥ You may have trouble sitting or lying down for long periods of time.
- ♥ You may have a problem breathing when the baby pushes against your lungs.
- ♥ Your uterus is now near your rib cage.
- ♥ You can feel parts of the baby through your abdominal wall.
- ♥ You may need to urinate more often (as the baby's head crowds your bladder).
- ♥ Your vaginal secretions increase.
- ♥ You may have hemorrhoids [HEM-or-roidz].
- ♥ You may have heartburn.
- ♥ You may sweat more easily.
- ♥ You may have some leakage of colostrum (the fluid that will feed your baby until your milk comes in) from your breasts as they begin to produce milk.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

- ♥ Have a prenatal checkup every two weeks this month or as prescribed by your doctor.
- ♥ Eat a balanced diet of small frequent meals, including cereal and grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and meat and beans.
- ♥ Drink six to eight glasses of water, juice and/or milk each day.
- ♥ Avoid alcoholic drinks, tobacco, caffeine and other drugs unless prescribed by your doctor.
- ♥ Take your prenatal vitamins and iron.
- ♥ Keep up your walking and stretching exercises.
- ♥ Practice the exercises from your child-birth class.
- ♥ Practice the relaxation techniques during Braxton-Hicks Contractions (the normal tightening or releasing of the uterine muscles).
- ♥ Review what happens in labor and delivery.
- ♥ Make financial arrangements with the hospital.
- ♥ Make arrangements for the baby's care after birth.
- ♥ Plan for someone to help you at home after the birth.
- ♥ Discuss names for the baby with your partner.
- ♥ Use seat belt properly. Place the lap belt under your abdomen as low on your hips as possible and across your upper thighs. Position the shoulder belt between the breasts.
- ♥ Call your health care provider right away if you have bleeding or a gush of fluid from your vagina, cramps, stomach pains or a dull backache, blurry vision or spots before your eyes, a feeling that baby is pushing down, a noticeable decrease in the baby's movements, or more than five contractions in one hour.



Adapted From Nine Months to Get Ready. . . You Can Make a Difference, the Arizona Department of Health Services.