



Ninth Month

Weeks Thirty-Six to Forty

YOUR BABY

- ♥ Your baby weighs 6½ to 7½ pounds and is about 20 inches long.
 - The head is one-quarter the total length of the baby.
 - The eye color is dark grey (this may change after birth).
 - The bones are fully formed although still softer than the bones of adults.
 - The fingernails become complete and may grow long.
 - Your baby may drop into your pelvis in preparation for delivery.
 - The baby may seem quieter because there is less space for baby to move and turn.
 - The major organs are complete and their functions are maturing.
 - Your baby continues to have periods of sleep and activity.
 - Your baby's systems and organs still grow so he or she will be ready to breathe and grow after birth.
- ♥ About one quart of amniotic fluid surrounds your baby.
- ♥ Your baby grows about 2½ inches and gains about 2 pounds.

YOUR BODY

- ♥ Your fatigue, lower back aches and false labor pains may increase.
- ♥ Your abdomen is getting bigger and your belly button may stick out.
- ♥ You may have mild swelling in your hands and feet.
- ♥ You may feel pressure low in the pelvis as the baby settles into position for birth.
- ♥ The Braxton-Hicks Contractions may be more frequent.
- ♥ Your sleep may be disturbed.
 - You may need to urinate more often.
 - You may need to change positions often.
- ♥ You may tire easily and often feel drowsy.
- ♥ A good position for sleeping is on your side with pillows under your tummy, behind your back and between your knees.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

- ♥ Get a prenatal checkup each week or as prescribed by your doctor until the baby arrives.
- ♥ 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.
- ♥ Continue to exercise and practice for childbirth.
- ♥ You should talk to your doctor regarding travel.
- ♥ Plan for a birth control method.
- ♥ Use your 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.
- ♥ List phone numbers of people to call when labor begins.
- ♥ Make arrangements for siblings for when you have to go to the hospital.
- ♥ You should pack your suitcase.
 - Pack clothes and other personal items to use at the hospital.
 - Pack clothes for you and your baby to wear home.
 - Bring a focal point or other items to use during labor.
- ♥ Treat yourself and your partner to something special.
- ♥ Decide whether you are going to breastfeed or bottle feed your baby.
- ♥ Time your contractions. You are in labor if:
 - Your contractions are regular or evenly spaced apart.
 - They happen more than five times an hour.
 - They last for 30 to 70 seconds.
 - They get worse as you move around.
- ♥ Call your health care provider if you think you are in labor.



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