

3RD TRIMESTER *from 28 weeks until delivery*

Your journey may seem harder now.

Your tummy is stretched as far as it can go, and yet every day, it grows bigger and bigger. Just remember, in a few weeks, you'll be meeting your baby.

Your body

For some of these symptoms, rest and regular exercise are the best remedies. For others, delivery brings relief. Some of your symptoms may be explained in the 2nd trimester section.

More clear vaginal discharge—Is normal.

Milk from the breast—Is normal.

Frequent urination—Is normal, unless it burns. It's from the baby pressing on your bladder.

Tired and irritable—From interrupted sleep. You may have less patience for family and friends. If you are feeling overwhelmed, are crying, feeling worried, or anxious, you may be depressed. It's best to talk with your health care provider about treatment options and about how to prevent postpartum depression.

Leaking urine—No one tells you about this, but it can happen.—Ugh!—Kegel exercises, 50 to 100 per day may help.

Itching rash—Try a moisturizer; if severe, discuss with your provider.

Heartburn—Try antacids and eating smaller meals more frequently. Sit up for a 1/2 hour after a meal. When you lie down, try your right side. (Your stomach empties to the right.)

Constipation—Increase fresh fruits, veggies, and water. Ask your provider about a stool softener.

Hemorrhoids—Sadly, we're not kidding about this either. Ask your provider about over-the-counter remedies. Prevent constipation.

Skin changes—Darker nipples and a line on your tummy are normal.

Leg cramps—May occur at night when you're trying to sleep. Point your toes toward your tummy. Increase your calcium intake.

Lower back pain and sciatica—Bend at your knees. Don't twist and bend at the same time. Try abdominal strengthening exercises. Consider seeing a physical therapist or getting a massage.

Swelling feet and ankles—Elevate your legs, increase your water and protein intake. If severe, discuss with your provider.

Tingling or numbness in your hands—May indicate carpal tunnel syndrome. Try wrist splints to keep your wrists straight and discuss with your provider.

Your baby

Babies gain 1/4 to 1/2 pound every week!

At 28 weeks—The baby is 14 inches long and weighs about 2 lb. Your baby is growing rapidly now.

His lungs continue to mature and breathing movements begin.

Her sleep/wake patterns develop.

He starts to hiccup—From swallowing amniotic fluid, a good sign of normal development.

By 34 weeks—Many babies have snuggled into a head-down position, which most of them stay in.

By delivery—Most babies are 18 to 22 inches long and weigh between 6 to 9 lb.

Nutrition

You may find your appetite decreasing. It's important to eat a balanced diet because the baby is growing rapidly now.

Continue taking your prenatal vitamin daily.

Eat 5 to 6 small meals or snacks each day.

Avoid carbonated drinks—They make indigestion worse.

Be sure to eat 3 servings of protein and calcium each day:

- Good sources of protein—Hard-boiled egg, beans, peas, sunflower seeds, cashews, almonds, or other nuts.
- Good sources of calcium—Yogurt drinks, cheese, cottage cheese, calcium fortified juice, sardines, green leafy vegetables.

To do list

- Finalize names, get a car seat, and pack your bag.**
- Take a hospital tour and choose a pediatrician.**
- Consider cord blood banking**—The baby's cord blood is rich in stem cells that are unique and valuable. These cells have potential for medical uses in the future.
- Group B strep screening between 35 and 37 weeks.**
- Discuss expanded newborn screening**—Tests your baby for a range of serious conditions.
- Discuss your birth plan with your provider**—It is important to trust your doctor or midwife. Ask for open communication so you'll stay informed and be part of every decision.

Add beans to your diet.



When to call your provider

- If you have a severe headache.
- If you have bleeding or leaking fluid from your vagina.
- If you have decreased or absent fetal movement.
- If you see white spots or have any other unusual visual changes.
- If you have contractions or any feeling of pressure that occurs more than 5 times per hour prior to 36 weeks.