

Pregnancy

A pregnant woman.

Pregnant [zebra](#)

Pregnancy is when a [woman](#) or [female mammal](#) has an unborn [baby](#) inside her. During pregnancy, a female is called "pregnant". A human pregnancy is about 38 weeks long, from [conception](#) to [childbirth](#). Usually the mother has one baby at a time. Sometimes the mother has two babies at one time. Two babies are called [twins](#). The mother can have three or more babies at one time. This does not happen very often in [humans](#).^[1] About one in 85 pregnancies are of twins, and about one in 7,000 are of triplets.

Some people have trouble becoming pregnant. This is called [infertility](#). Women and men with infertility may take drugs or have surgery to help a pregnancy start. Some people use treatments that are not natural, like [in vitro fertilization](#), to become pregnant with the help of a doctor.

Start

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Pregnancy usually starts after a woman has [sexual intercourse](#) with a [man](#). Her [ovum](#) (or egg) and his [sperm](#) (seed) come together and form a [zygote](#) (fertilized egg) inside her.

Growth of the baby

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When the woman's egg and the man's seed come together, it makes one cell called a *zygote*. The zygote grows into an [embryo](#), which grows into a [fetus](#). When the fetus is ready, the baby is [born](#).

- [Embryo at 4 weeks after fertilization](#)^[2]

Embryo at 4
weeks after
fertilization^[2]

- [Fetus at 8 weeks after fertilization\[3\]](#)

Fetus at 8 weeks
after
fertilization[\[3\]](#)

- [Fetus at 18 weeks after fertilization\[4\]](#)

Fetus at 18 weeks
after
fertilization[\[4\]](#)

- [Fetus at 38 weeks after fertilization\[5\]](#)

Fetus at 38 weeks
after
fertilization[\[5\]](#)

- [Relative size in 1st month \(simplified illustration\)](#)

Relative size in 1st
month (simplified
illustration)

- [Relative size in 3rd month \(simplified illustration\)](#)

Relative size in 3rd month (simplified illustration)

- [Relative size in 5th month \(simplified illustration\)](#)

Relative size in 5th month (simplified illustration)

- [Relative size in 9th month \(simplified illustration\)](#)

Relative size in 9th month (simplified illustration)

Length

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Human pregnancy is divided into three parts called [trimesters](#). A trimester is about three months long. During the first trimester, the woman might feel ill in her [stomach](#). She might have to [urinate](#) often. During the second trimester, the woman's [abdomen](#) starts to stick out. During the third trimester, her abdomen sticks out even more, and she becomes even heavier.

Birth

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See the main article: [Childbirth](#)

At the end of a full pregnancy, the woman's body pushes the baby out through her [vagina](#). This is called *delivering a baby* or *giving birth*. Mothers can get help for birth from a midwife, nurse, or doctor. In some places, mothers give birth at home. In other places, mothers give birth in a hospital. Mothers who are ill or hurt may need to go to a hospital.

Giving birth can hurt a lot at the end. In hospitals, a doctor or midwife can give drugs to the mother to reduce the pain.

If the baby cannot be pushed out, then a doctor can cut the mother open to take the baby out. This operation is called a [Caesarean section](#).

Social problems

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The [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) says that pregnant women must be given time away from work or equal [welfare](#) for her baby without losing her job (Article 11).

Sometimes, people who are teenagers become pregnant. [Teenage pregnancies](#) have a set of problems, which need to be carefully considered.

Pregnancy problems

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Sometimes there are problems with pregnancies. A [miscarriage](#) (spontaneous abortion) is when the baby dies before it is born. A [stillbirth](#) is when the baby is dead when it is born. There are also diseases caused by pregnancy.

Sometimes, women die from giving birth. In [developed countries](#), this is much less common than it used to be. Every year, about 500,000 women die from giving birth, while about 7,000,000 mothers have big problems from giving birth.^[6] For example, giving birth can tear the mother's body and cause an [obstetric fistula](#).

Abortion

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See the main article: [Abortion](#)

A pregnancy can also stop without the baby being born. This is called [abortion](#). Doctors can do things that will stop a pregnancy. Such an abortion is called *induced abortion*. Countries have different laws about induced abortions. Some countries allow it, and others do not. In some countries, it is allowed, but only for certain reasons, such as the pregnancy resulting from [rape](#), or a doctor saying that the pregnant woman might die if the pregnancy

is not stopped. People also have different opinions about abortion. Often, these are influenced by religious beliefs.

There are a few [diseases](#) that can kill a woman or make her very ill if she has a baby. Having abortions could save the lives or health of these mothers.

Pregnancy test

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A pregnancy test.

A pregnancy test is something that women use to tell whether they are pregnant. The woman urinates on the stick. If the woman is pregnant, a plus sign or two lines will appear on the stick.^[7] If the woman is not pregnant, then a minus sign or one line will appear on the stick.

Notes

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1. [↑] Baldwin, Virginia J. (1994). *Pathology of Multiple Pregnancy*. Springer Science & Business Media. p. 349. [ISBN 978-0-387-94011-3](#).
2. [↑] [3D Pregnancy Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#) (Image from gestational age of 6 weeks). Retrieved 2007-08-28. A rotatable 3D version of this photo is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-14 at the [Wayback Machine](#), and a sketch is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#).
3. [↑] [3D Pregnancy Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#) (Image from gestational age of 10 weeks). Retrieved 2007-08-28. A rotatable 3D version of this photo is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-16 at the [Wayback Machine](#), and a sketch is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#).
4. [↑] [3D Pregnancy Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#) (Image from gestational age of 20 weeks). Retrieved 2007-08-28. A rotatable 3D version of this photo is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-16 at the [Wayback Machine](#), and a sketch is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#).
5. [↑] [3D Pregnancy Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#) (Image from gestational age of 40 weeks). Retrieved 2007-08-28. A rotatable 3D version of this photo is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-16 at the [Wayback Machine](#), and a sketch is available [here Archived](#) 2007-09-27 at the [Wayback Machine](#).
6. [↑] *Education material for teachers of midwifery : midwifery education modules* (PDF) (2nd ed.). Geneva [Switzerland]: World Health Organisation. 2008. p. 3. [ISBN 978-92-4-154666-9](#). Archived from [the original](#) (PDF) on 2015-02-21. Retrieved 2016-08-31.
7. [↑] ["Home Pregnancy Test Kits"](#). IMG Health Publications. Archived from [the original](#) on 23 April 2015. Retrieved 29 April 2015.

Other websites

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Wikimedia Commons has media related to ***Human pregnancy***.

- [What Is Prenatal Care?](#)

Tests and procedures relating to pregnancy and <u>childbirth</u>		
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• v• t• e</div>		
Maternal tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pregnancy test• Prenatal testing• Leopold's maneuvers	
Fetal tests	Imaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obstetric ultrasonography<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Nuchal scan◦ Anomaly scan◦ Crown-rump length• Fetal movement counting• Contraction stress test• Nonstress test• Vibroacoustic stimulation• Biophysical profile<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Amniotic fluid index
	Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chorionic villus sampling• Amniocentesis• Triple test• Quad test• Fetoscopy• Fetal scalp blood testing• Fetal scalp stimulation test• Percutaneous umbilical cord blood sampling• Apt test• Kleihauer–Betke test• Lung maturity<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Lecithin-sphingomyelin ratio◦ Lamellar body count◦ Fetal fibronectin test
	Other	

		• Cardiotocography	
Interventions	• Fetal surgery • Fetendo • Podalic version ◦ External cephalic version • Amnioinfusion		
Delivery	Vaginal delivery	Induction	• Assisted vaginal delivery • Artificial rupture of membranes • Episiotomy • Symphysiotomy • Obstetrical forceps • Vacuum extraction • Odon device
		Dystocia management	• McRoberts maneuver • Wood's screw maneuver • Zavanelli maneuver
		Third stage of labor	• Manual placenta removal
	Caesarean section	• Elective • On maternal request • EXIT procedure • Resuscitative hysterotomy	
	Postpartum bleeding	• Hysterectomy • B-Lynch suture	

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