

Pregnancy Wellness: Second Trimester

Congratulations on reaching your second trimester. This is weeks 13 to 27 of pregnancy. Many people feel better than they did during the first trimester. Your care team is here to support you and your baby.



What You May Feel

Your body keeps changing to help your baby grow. Here are some things you may notice:

- **Growing belly and breasts:** Your belly and breasts get bigger as your baby grows. Wear a bra that supports you well and loose, comfortable clothes.
- **Feeling baby move:** You may feel your baby move for the first time. These gentle movements are called “quickening.”
- **Less nausea:** Many people feel less sick to their stomachs now. Your appetite may come back.
- **Back pain:** Your back may ache as your belly grows. Use a chair with good support, sleep on your side with a pillow between your legs, and avoid lifting heavy things.
- **Leg cramps:** You may get cramps in your legs, especially at night. Stretch your legs, drink water, and try a warm bath to help.
- **Skin changes:** You may see brown patches on your face or stretch marks on your belly. This is normal.

- **Mild swelling:** Your feet or ankles may swell. Rest with your feet up, and wear comfortable shoes.
- **Headaches:** Some people get headaches. If they are bad, rest, drink water, and talk to your care team.
- **Bleeding gums:** Hormone changes can cause your gums to bleed. Keep up with your dental health, and use a soft toothbrush.
- **Vaginal discharge:** You may see more clear or white discharge. Call your care team if it smells bad, changes color, or causes itching.

Healthy Habits

- Eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy. It is important to have a well-balanced and portion-controlled diet for each meal.
- Take your prenatal vitamin every day.
- Drink water often.
- Avoid smoking, alcohol, and drugs that are not prescribed by your care team. Stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Wash your hands often and cook food well to avoid germs.
- Get enough sleep each night.

Exercise

Exercise is usually safe in low-risk pregnancies, but always talk to your care team before starting or changing your routine. Staying active can help you feel better, sleep better, and prepare your body for labor. A good goal is to exercise for 30 minutes at a time, 5 days each week.

Safe exercises for most people include:

- Walking at a steady, comfortable pace
- Swimming or water aerobics
- Prenatal yoga or gentle stretching

These activities are easy on your joints and help support your changing body.

Do not start any new or hard exercises, like running, lifting heavy weights, or high-impact sports, without checking with your care team first.

Stop exercising right away if you feel:

- Dizzy or faint
- Short of breath
- Pain or cramping
- Bleeding or leaking fluid

Always listen to your body. It is OK to rest or go slower. Your health and your baby's health come first.



Work or School

Most people can keep working or going to school during the second trimester. Many people feel more energy during this time, but it is still important to take care of yourself.

Here are some tips to help you stay healthy:

- Take breaks to sit, stretch, or rest when you need to.
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Eat small, healthy snacks to keep your energy up during the day.

- Wear comfortable clothing and supportive shoes.

If your job or school involves a lot of standing, heavy lifting, or stress, talk to your care team.

Travel

Travel is usually safe in low-risk pregnancies, and many people find the second trimester a good time to take trips. Always check with your care team before you travel, especially if going far from home.

If you are traveling by car:

- Wear your seat belt low on your hips and under your belly.
- Take breaks every 1 to 2 hours to stretch, walk, and use the bathroom.
- Bring healthy snacks and water to stay comfortable and hydrated.

If you are flying:

- Walk around or stretch every hour to help with blood flow and reduce swelling.
- Drink plenty of water, as airplane air can be dry.
- Compression socks can help prevent leg swelling.

It is also a good idea to:

- Carry a copy of your medical records, just in case.
- Know where the nearest hospital or clinic is at your travel destination.
- Your care team can help you make a safe travel plan.

Intimacy

Sex is usually safe during the second trimester if you have a low-risk pregnancy, but always follow your care team's advice. They may ask you to avoid sex if you have certain conditions, like bleeding or early labor signs.

It is normal for your feelings about intimacy to change. Some people feel more comfortable and interested in sex during this time. Others may feel tired or less interested. Both are completely normal.



If you choose to have sex:

- Use comfortable positions that avoid pressure on your belly.
- Stop if you feel pain, have bleeding, or feel uncomfortable.
- Contact your care team if you have any concerns or questions.

If you feel uncomfortable or unwell, being close to your partner in other ways, like cuddling, talking, or relaxing together, can also help you feel supported during pregnancy.

Mental Health

During pregnancy, your feelings may change often. You might feel excited one day and worried or tired the next. This is normal. Your body and hormones are changing, and that can affect your mood.

To care for your mental health:

- Rest when you can. Your body is working hard.
- Do calming activities like reading, walking, or listening to music.
- Talk to your care team if you feel very sad, anxious, or have trouble sleeping.
- Reach out to people you trust, like friends, family, or a support group.
- Ask for help when you need it. You are not alone.

Taking care of your mind is just as important as taking care of your body during pregnancy.

Thank You for Choosing Us

Thank you for trusting us with your care. We are here to support you and want you to feel your best. Contact us with any questions.

IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, CALL 911 OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.



The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.

Last updated May 2025