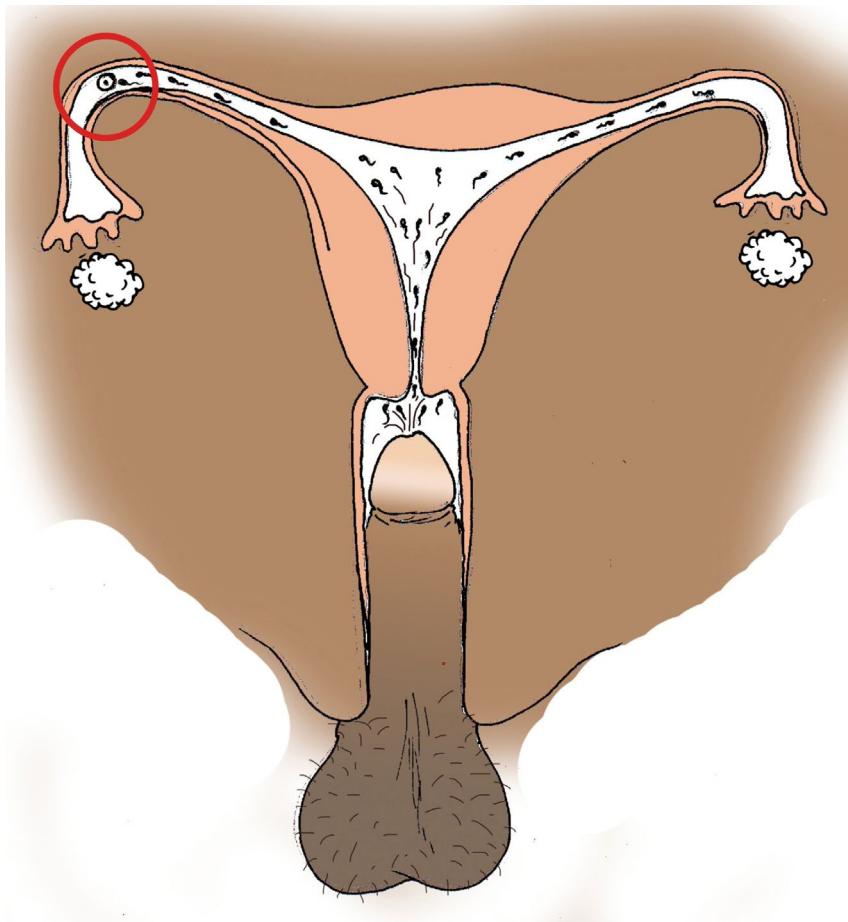


# **GUIDE TO PREGNANCY**



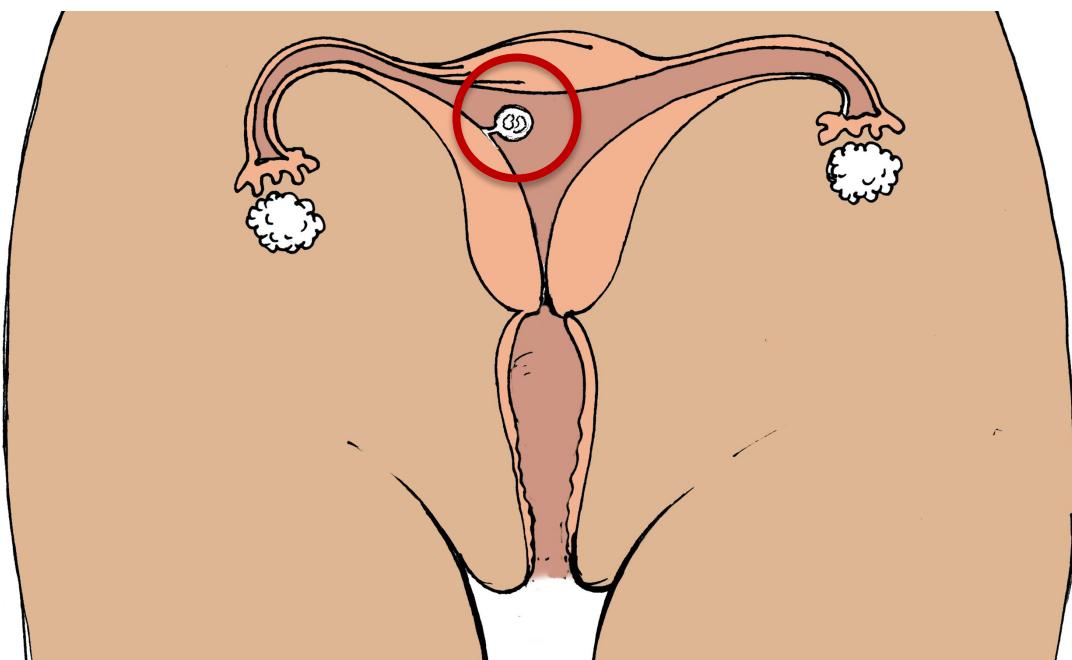
# BASICS OF PREGNANCY

- A woman can become pregnant after she has unprotected sex.
- The sperm released from the man's penis during sex swims up through the woman's cervix and uterus
- The sperm meets the egg in the fallopian tube



# PREGNANCY

- Once the egg and sperm have joined together, they form an embryo, which attaches to the inside of your uterus and starts growing into a baby
- Because the embryo is attached to the uterus, you will not bleed and you will miss your period--this is the first sign of pregnancy
- It takes 40 weeks for the baby to grow



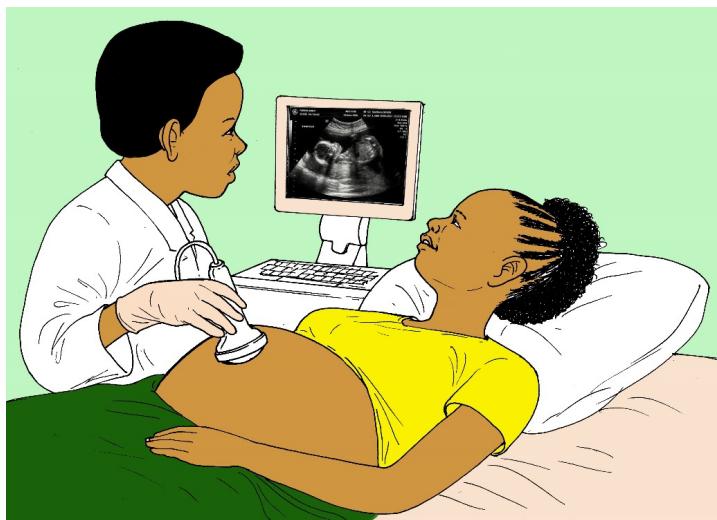
# ANTENATAL CARE

- You should keep track of your menstrual cycles
- You should go to the health centre as soon as you know you are pregnant
- You should plan to attend antenatal care visits at least 4 times during your pregnancy and more if there are complications



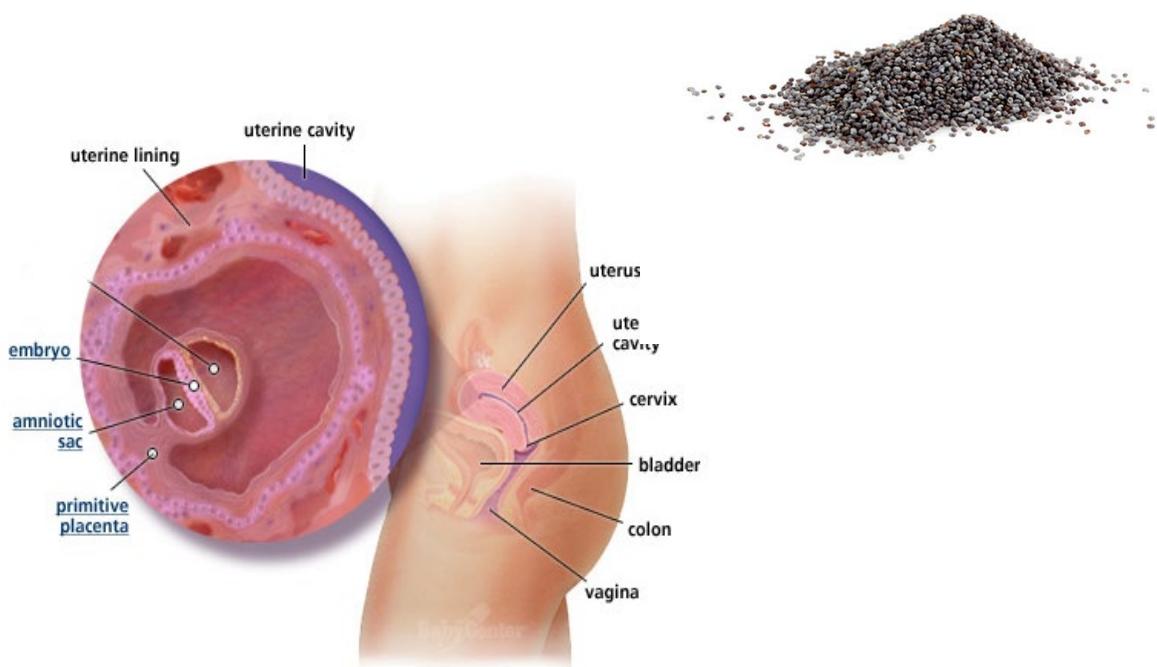
# ANTENATAL CARE

- At your antenatal care visits, you will receive testing to ensure your pregnancy is healthy
- Receiving regular antenatal care can help identify if you are at risk for preterm labor



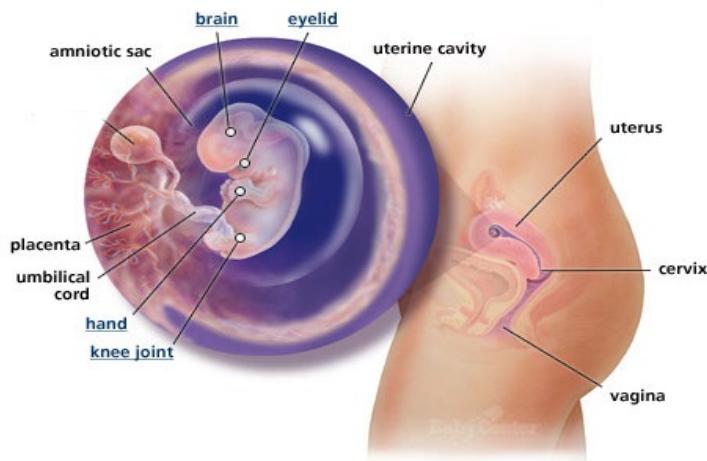
# WEEK 0-4

- Your baby is very tiny, the size of a millet seed
- The amniotic sac (bag of fluid that surrounds the baby) and placenta will develop
- You likely will not experience any symptoms during this time, but some you might feel mild bloating, cramping, spotting or mood swings

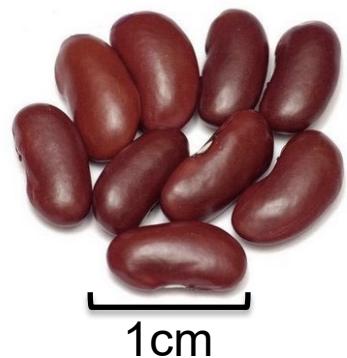


# WEEK 5-8

- The baby's brain, heart, lungs, and kidneys are developing
- The baby's arms and legs start to grow, and the baby starts to move (but you won't feel it yet)
- You may experience nausea and vomiting, mood swings, sore breasts, fatigue, and heightened sense of smell

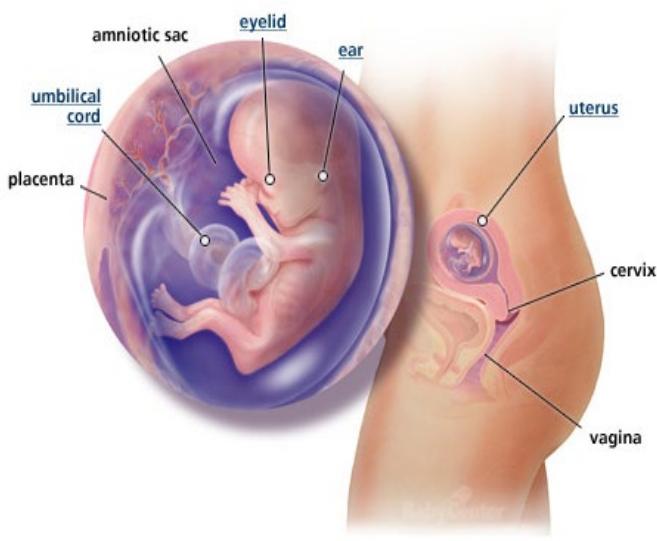


By week 8, your baby is the size of a kidney bean



# WEEK 9-12

- The baby starts to develop fingers and toes
- The baby's eyes and ears have developed, but the eyelids are shut
- The baby's mouth is developing
- You may notice your clothing feels tighter
- You may start to have constipation and heartburn

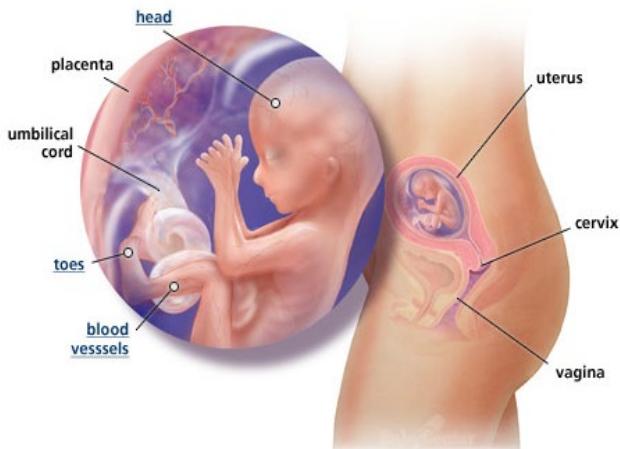


By week 12, your baby is the size of a lime

5cm

# WEEK 13-16

- Your baby will start it's own blood and urine
- Your baby can now make faces
- Vomiting should stop by this time in the pregnancy, and your belly will continue to grow

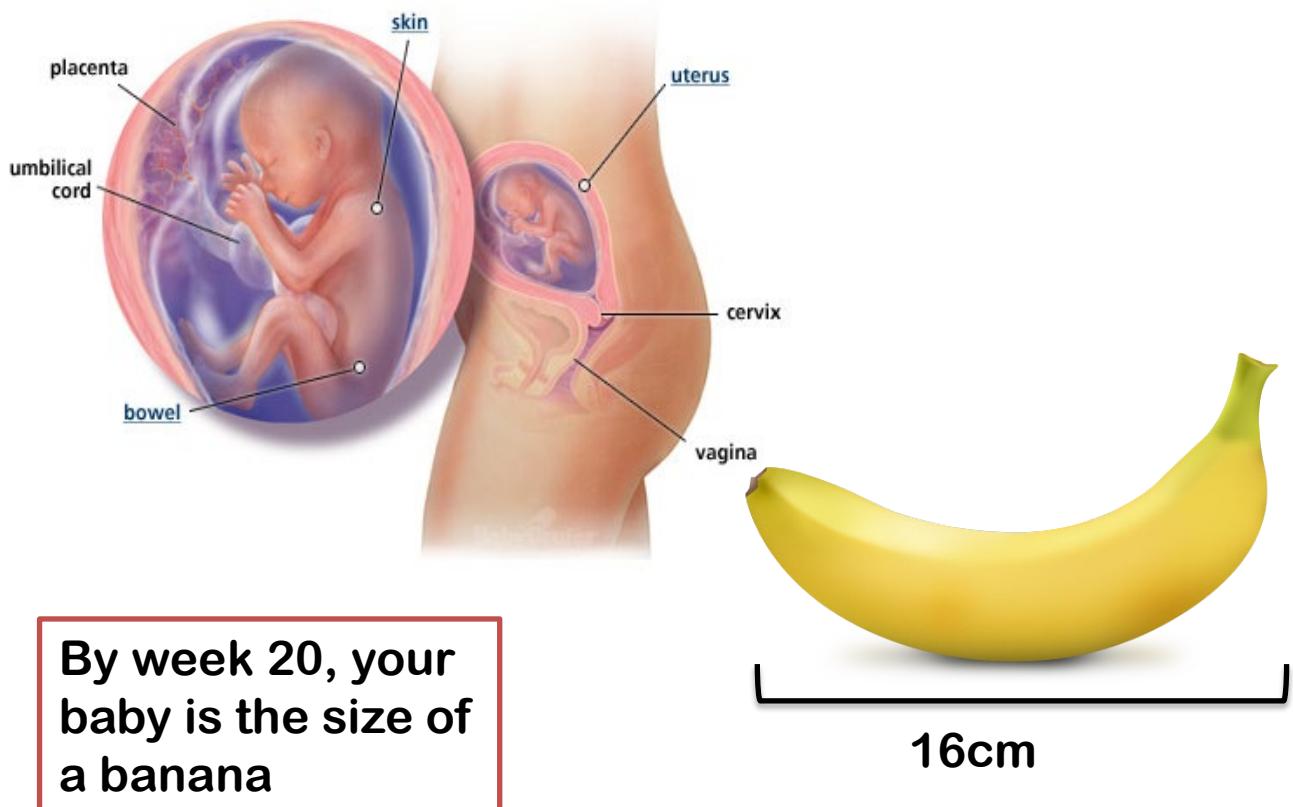


By week 16, your baby is the size of an avocado



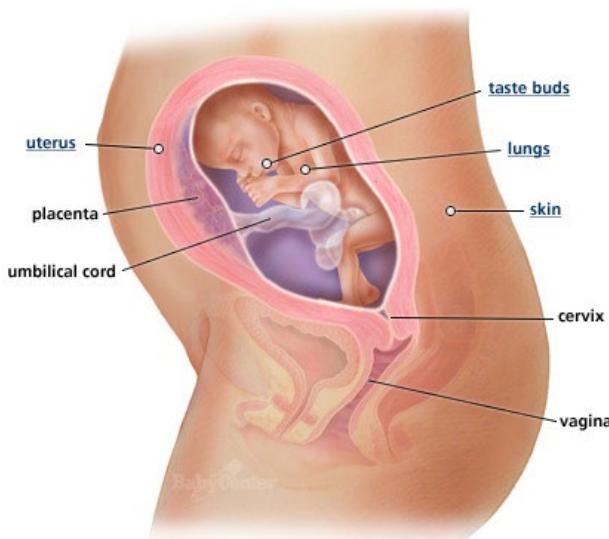
# WEEK 17-20

- Your baby's senses are developing
- Hair is growing on your baby's head
- You will start to feel your baby move
- Your belly will be growing much bigger
- You can see the baby's gender on ultrasound



# WEEK 21-24

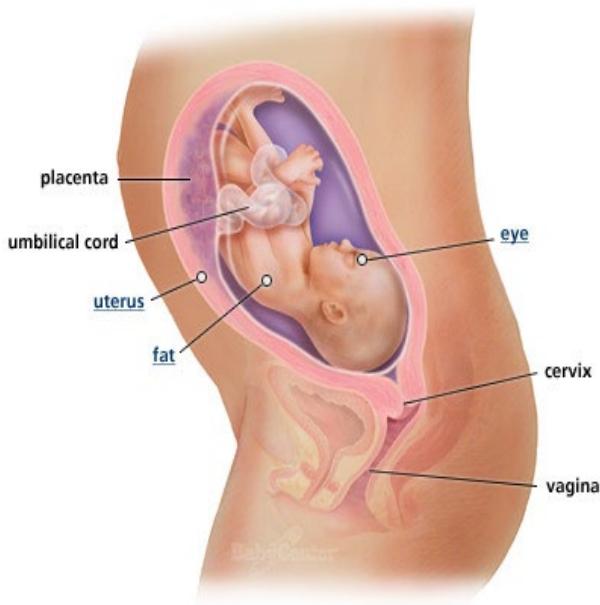
- Your baby's lungs are developing
- The baby can hear you talking
- You may start to develop stretch marks on your belly and thighs
- You may also notice mild swelling of your legs and ankles



By week 24, your baby is the size of a cantaloupe

# WEEK 25-28

- Your baby is starting to sleep and wake up at regular times
- You may feel your baby start to hiccup
- You may start developing leg cramps and back pain

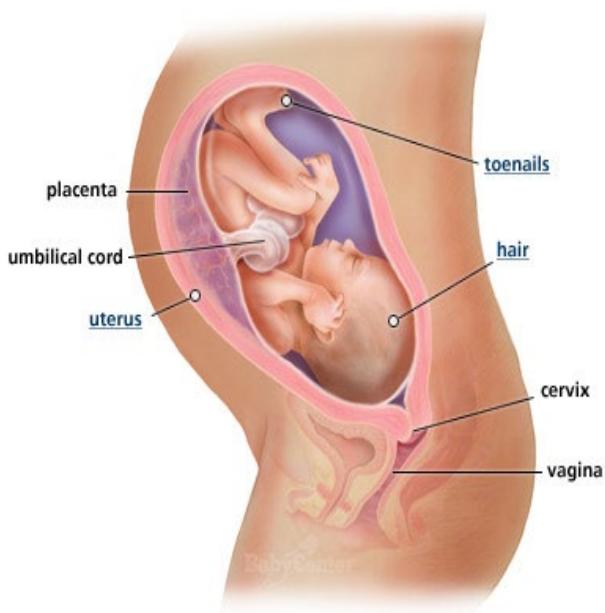


By week 28, your baby is the size of an aubergine

38 cm

# WEEK 29-32

- Your baby's brain is growing so the head is getting much bigger
- Your baby will be much more active, and you will feel kicking more often
- You may feel dizzy if you stand up too quickly
- You may have heartburn, constipation, or backache

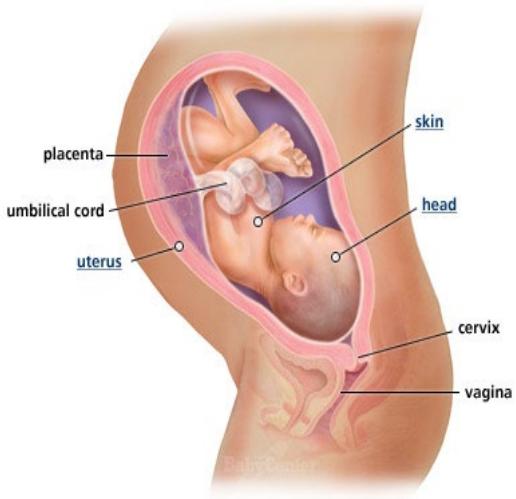


By week 32, your baby is the size of a squash

42 cm

# WEEK 33-36

- Your baby has finished developing and is now just growing in size
- You may have trouble sleeping
- You may have trouble breathing when walking long distances
- You may also feel some irregular, mostly painless contractions—these are called Braxton Hicks contractions and are different from labour contractions

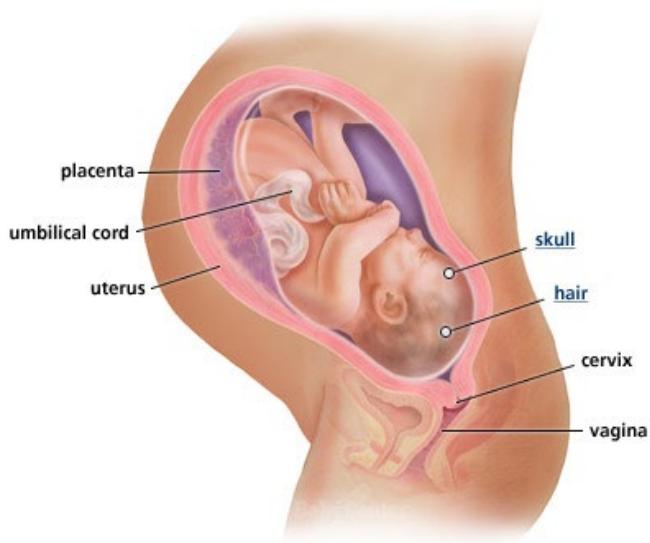


By week 36, your baby is the size of a pineapple

46 cm

# WEEK 37-40

- Your baby is adding fat to his body to help control body temperature after birth
- You may start to notice some leakage of milk from your breasts
- If you do not deliver by week 40, you should go to the health center for an evaluation



By week 40, your baby is the size of a watermelon

51 cm



# HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR PREGNANCY HEALTHY?

- Attend antenatal care visits
- Take iron supplements
- Eat a healthy diet
- Don't smoke
- Don't let anyone hurt you

# IRON SUPPLEMENTATION

- Iron-deficiency anaemia is a decrease in the number of red blood cells in the body due to a lack of iron
- Women who are anaemic are more likely to deliver a baby preterm
- Women who take iron supplements during pregnancy are less likely to be anaemic and less likely to have complications in their pregnancy



# **GOOD NUTRITION**

- Pregnant women should have balanced diets with foods from all six of food groups: staples, fats, animals, legumes, vegetables, and fruits
- Women who eat too little or do not eat the right foods have an increased risk of complications in pregnancy, including anaemia and preterm delivery



# **YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO DELIVER YOUR BABY TOO EARLY IF...**

- You smoke or chew tobacco leaves during pregnancy**



- Your partner or someone else is hurting you**



# **WHEN SHOULD YOU GO TO THE HEALTH CENTRE?**



- You have regular, painful contractions
- You are leaking water from the vagina
- You are bleeding from the vagina
- The baby is not moving or is not moving as much as before
- You have not delivered by week 40

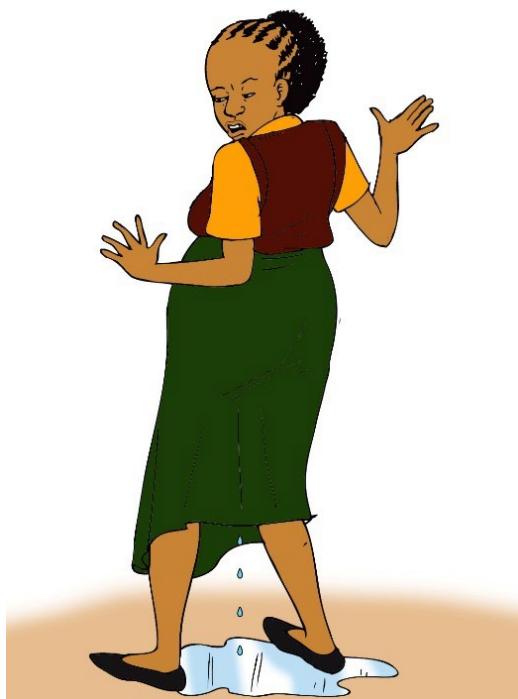
# CONTRACTIONS

- Contractions might feel like severe menstrual cramps
- The pain may start in your back or in your belly
- Labor contractions come at regular intervals
- They become more painful over time



# **LEAKING OF FLUID**

- The water that surrounds the baby is called amniotic fluid
- When your “water breaks,” the sac surrounding the baby opens and the fluid comes out the vagina
- The fluid might come out in a big gush or it might leak out in small amounts



# VAGINAL BLEEDING

- Vaginal bleeding or spotting early in the pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of preterm labor
- If the bleeding happens multiple times or on multiple days, this might be a sign of preterm labor

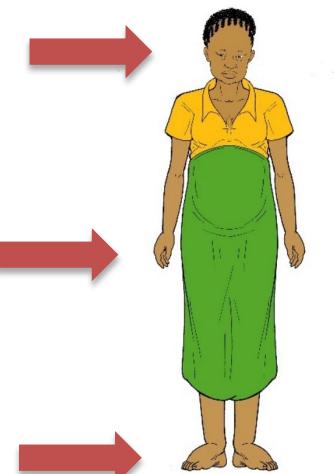


# HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

- If you have any of the symptoms of high blood pressure, you should go to the health centre immediately
  - Abdominal pain
  - Severe headaches
  - Blurred vision
  - Swelling of the face, hands, or feet
  - Seizures
- High blood pressure can be life-threatening during pregnancy
- If you have high blood pressure, you might need to deliver the baby early



**Seizures**

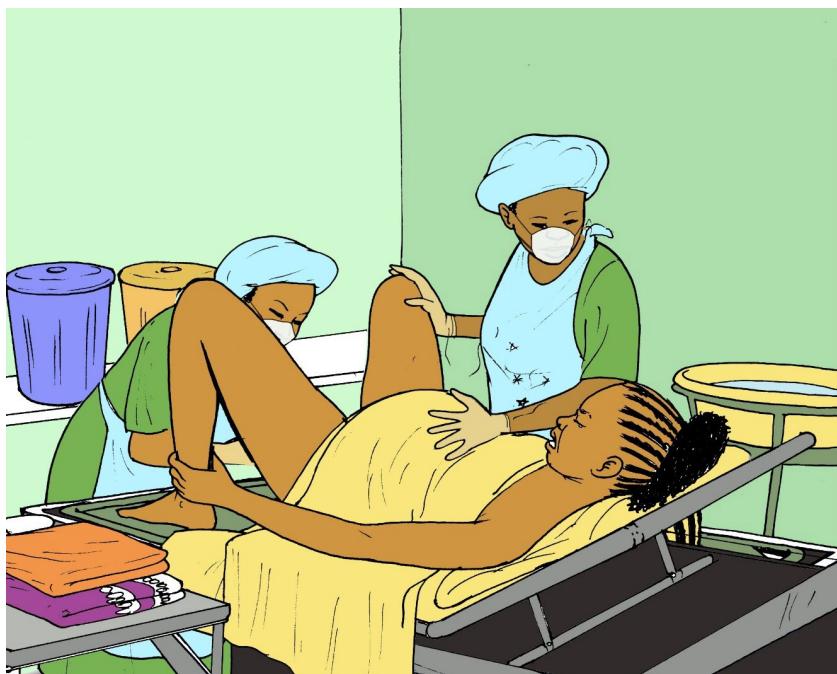


**Swelling**

**Headache**

# **WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE HEALTH CENTRE?**

- You will be evaluated by a skilled birth attendant so that you and your baby will be healthy
- If you are sick or the baby is preterm, you may be sent to the nearest hospital for care by a specialist
- If you are in labor, you will deliver the baby
  - You might have a vaginal birth
  - You might require a Caesar



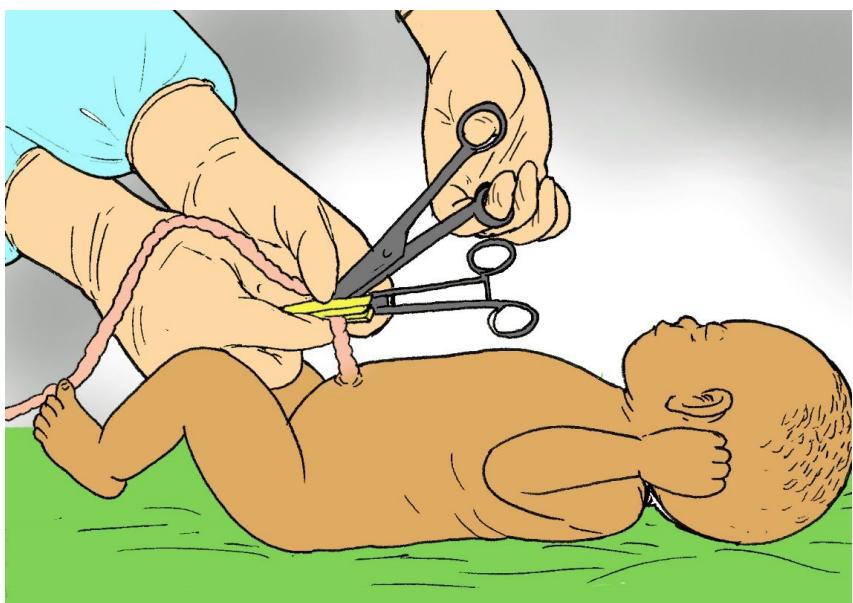
# HAVING A CAESAR

- Caesars are performed in the operating theater
- During a Caesar, the surgeon will deliver the baby through an incision in the abdomen
- Women who have infections, problems with the placenta, or chronic health conditions such as diabetes are more likely to need a Caesar



# AFTER DELIVERY

- The umbilical cord runs from an opening in the baby's stomach to the placenta
- Once the baby is born, there is no need for this connection anymore
- After a birth, the umbilical cord should be clamped or tied and cut with a clean instrument to avoid infection



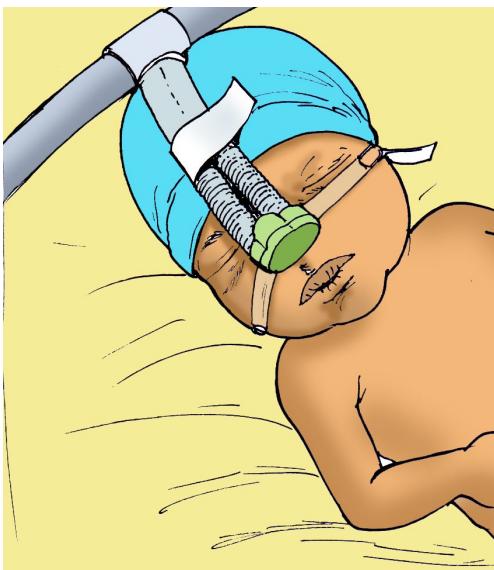
# KANGAROO CARE

- It is very important that the baby is kept warm after delivery
- To do this, you should put the baby on your chest directly on your skin and wrap a blanket or a chitenje around the baby
- Carrying the baby wrapped this way is called “kangaroo care”



# HOSPITAL CARE FOR BABY

- Preterm babies are sometimes sick and require help with breathing
- The baby may need to stay in the hospital for special care



# WHAT IS PRETERM DELIVERY?

- Pregnancy lasts 40 weeks
- If your labor begins before the 37th week of pregnancy, you are in preterm labor
- Preterm delivery is the most common cause of death in newborn babies
- In Malawi, 1 in every 5 babies is born preterm



# HOW DO I KNOW IF MY BABY IS PRETERM?

- Keep track of your period using
  - A calendar
  - Beads
  - Your phone
- Your health care provider will use the first day you bled to calculate your due date
- A full term pregnancy is **40 weeks**
- If you have the baby more than one month before your due date, your baby is preterm



# **WHY IS PRETERM BIRTH A PROBLEM?**

Babies born too soon can have many problems

- Difficulty breathing
- Infections
- Low blood sugar
- Low body temperature
- Seizures
- Injury to brain



# **HOW DO I PREVENT PRETERM DELIVERY IN FUTURE PREGNANCIES?**

- Pregnancy Spacing
- Prevent or Treat Infection
- Contraception

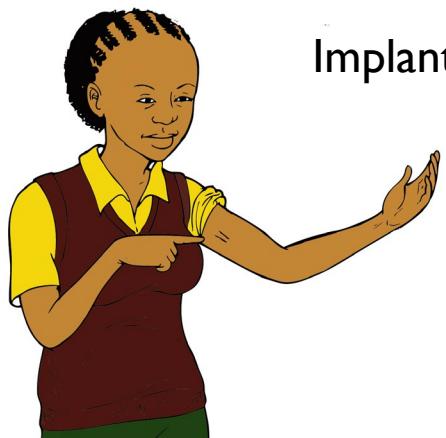
# PREGNANCY SPACING

- Waiting at least 2 years between pregnancies will decrease the chance of preterm labor
- If you are sexually active, it is best to use contraception to prevent pregnancy and condoms to prevent infection

Birth Control Pills



Implant



Injectable Hormones

# **PREVENT INFECTION**

- Infection in any part of the body increases the risk of preterm birth
- It is important to prevent infection and to treat any infection that you already have
- When the mom is HIV+, preterm babies are more likely to be born with HIV than full term babies
- It is important to continue taking your medications for HIV or any other infection throughout pregnancy



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- Illustrator: Rogers Chilemba
- Creator:
  - Susan Raine, MD, JD, LLM, MEd
  - Jane Morris, MD
- Contributors/Translators:
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  - Abiba Matengula
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