

FIRST TRIMISTER OR TRIMISTER 1

Below is a **comprehensive, human-readable summary** of what typically applies to **First Trimester (Week 1–13)** of pregnancy — including the **risks, important diet, precautions, symptoms, and health guidance**.

 **Note:** This is educational information only. It is **not medical advice**.

For any medical decisions, consult a qualified healthcare professional.

First Trimester (Week 1–13) — Overview

The first trimester begins on the first day of your last menstrual period and extends through week 13 of pregnancy.

This is a critical period of early development, and many women experience significant physical changes.

1. Common Physical Changes & Symptoms

During the first trimester, the body undergoes hormonal shifts that can cause:

Typical (Normal) Symptoms

- ✓ Fatigue and tiredness
- ✓ Nausea and vomiting (morning sickness)
- ✓ Breast tenderness
- ✓ Frequent urination
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Mood swings
- ✓ Mild cramps
- ✓ Food aversions or cravings ✓ Change in sense of smell

These are generally common due to rising hormones such as estrogen and progesterone.

2. First Trimester Risks & Warning Signs

Most pregnancies progress normally, but the first trimester is also when some **complications** are more likely to occur.

Important Risks to Be Aware Of

1. Miscarriage

- This is the spontaneous loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks.
- Most miscarriages occur in the **first trimester**.
- They are often caused by chromosomal abnormalities rather than anything the mother did.

2. Ectopic Pregnancy

- A pregnancy that implants **outside the uterus** (usually in a fallopian tube). ☐ Can be dangerous if untreated.

Watch for these **warning signs** (seek immediate care):

- ! Severe abdominal pain or sharp one-sided pain
- ! Shoulder pain
- ! Vaginal bleeding or heavy spotting
- ! Dizziness or fainting

3. Diet & Nutrition (First Trimester)

Good nutrition supports early fetal development and helps manage symptoms.

Key Nutrients

Folic Acid (Folate)

- Crucial for early neural tube development.
- Reduces risk of neural tube defects (e.g., spina bifida). ☐ Sources: leafy greens, legumes, fortified cereals.

Iron

- Supports increased blood volume.
- Prevents anemia.
- Sources: red meat, beans, spinach.

Vitamin C

- Helps iron absorption.
- Supports immunity.
- Sources: oranges, peppers, berries.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

- Important for brain development.
- Sources: fish (low in mercury), flaxseeds, walnuts.

Protein

- Essential for fetal tissue growth.
 - Sources: lean meat, eggs, dairy, legumes.
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4. Foods To Consume (Helpful List)

- ✓ Fresh fruits & vegetables
 - ✓ Whole grains (brown rice, oats)
 - ✓ Lean proteins (eggs, chicken, fish low in mercury)
 - ✓ Low-fat dairy
 - ✓ Healthy fats (avocado, nuts)
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🚫 5. Foods & Substances to Avoid

During the first trimester, avoid:

- ✗ Raw or undercooked meats and eggs
 - ✗ Unpasteurized dairy
 - ✗ High-mercury fish (shark, swordfish, king mackerel)
 - ✗ Alcohol
 - ✗ Excess caffeine
 - ✗ Unwashed produce
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6. Supplements (Commonly Recommended)

Many healthcare providers recommend:

- ✓ Prenatal vitamins (containing folate + iron + B-vitamins) ✓ Folic acid (400–800 mcg daily)

Always consult a professional to confirm what supplements you need.

7. Precautions & Healthy Habits

✓ Rest & Self-Care

- Listen to your body; fatigue is common
- Nap or sleep more if needed

✓ Manage Nausea

- Small, frequent meals
- Dry crackers in the morning
- Ginger tea or candies

✓ Regular Prenatal Care

- First checkup ideally between 8–10 weeks
- Early detection of issues

✓ Avoid Certain Exposures

- Smoking

- Secondhand smoke
 - Harmful chemicals
 - High-impact exercise
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8. Emotional Well-Being

Hormonal shifts can affect mood. Relaxation techniques may help:

- ✓ Mild walking
 - ✓ Meditation
 - ✓ Light stretching or prenatal yoga
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9. When to Contact a Healthcare Provider (Important)

Seek medical advice if you have:

- ⌚ Heavy bleeding or clotting
- ⌚ Severe abdominal pain
- ⌚ Dizziness or fainting
- ⌚ Severe or persistent vomiting ⌚
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