Strange as it may seem, your doctor or midwife calculates your pregnancy starting from the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP). Pregnancy lasts about 38 weeks from conception to birth, but because it’s often hard to pin down exactly when the egg and sperm did their mating dance, practitioners count 40 weeks (280 days) of pregnancy, beginning with the start of your LMP. That’s why you’re already considered “two weeks pregnant” when you conceive.

Here’s how the timing breaks down in your first trimester.

**Your Pregnancy: 0 through 3 Weeks**

**Your Changing Body**

During the first two weeks or so of your cycle, your body’s like an anxious host anticipating the arrival of an important houseguest: First, your uterus sheds its old, unneeded lining when your period starts. Then, prompted by a surge in the

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**HOT TOPICS**

- The first signs of pregnancy (page 5)
- Symptoms you should never ignore (page 21)
- Tips for tender breasts (page 47)
- Coping with fatigue (page 52)
- Why you have to pee so much now (page 52)
- Getting enough folic acid (page 64)
hormones estrogen and progesterone coursing through your bloodstream, your womb begins priming itself to shelter a growing baby by building up a lush lining of blood-rich tissue. Meanwhile, several eggs race to mature in your ovaries, until the heartiest of the bunch bursts out and is swept into a fallopian tube to meet its suitors. Though many will try, only one of the awaiting army of sperm will successfully fertilize your egg. After its trip down your fallopian tube is complete, the fertilized egg nestles into your womb and sets up residence for the next nine months or so. You won’t know
that you’ve conceived, but you may soon start to notice the early signs of pregnancy: fatigue, frequent urination, and tender, swollen breasts. You may also have a little spotting a few days before your period is due. Some women confuse this implantation bleeding with menstruation—but only a small portion notice it at all. Even though you’re still waiting to find out for sure if you’re pregnant, don’t forget to take your folic acid!

Your Growing Baby

Just after ovulation, a momentous meeting takes place: A microscopic sperm cell breaks through the protective barrier surrounding your egg and fertilizes it. A baby is in the making! Over the next day or so, you and your mate’s DNA will do the tango within the fertilized egg, merging their genetic material into the blueprint for your baby-to-be. All the while, the fertilized egg is traveling down your fallopian tube toward your uterus, dividing and multiplying into a ball of 16 identical cells. By the time it reaches your uterus, three or four days later, and begins burrowing into the lining there a day or two after that, this ball will be stretched like a double-layered water balloon. The outer layer of cells will form the
placenta, the organ that delivers life-sustaining oxygen and nutrients to your baby; the inner layer will become your baby; and the fluid-filled center will become the amniotic sac that cushions her as she grows. The ball of cells is also producing the pregnancy hormone human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), which tells your ovaries to stop releasing eggs and triggers a boost in the production of estrogen and progesterone, which prevents your uterus from shedding its lining—and its tiny passenger. Right now, your baby is getting her oxygen and nutrients (and discarding her waste products) through microscopic tunnels that connect the developing ball of cells to the blood vessels in your uterine wall because the placenta won’t be ready to take over this task until the end of week 4. All this, and your baby-in-the-making (now technically called an embryo) is still no bigger than a poppy seed.

Your Pregnancy: 4 Weeks
Your Changing Body
Now that 28 days have passed since you last menstruated, the period that you’ve been expecting may be a no-show. If it’s still MIA in a few days, take a trip to the drugstore—a home pregnancy test may be able to confirm your news! If the test is positive, let out a celebratory whoop (or indulge in a few private tears)—false positives are much less common than false negatives. Then call your practitioner and set up your first prenatal checkup. Don’t be surprised when she says she won’t see you for a month or more—most initial prenatal visits are scheduled for around week eight. If you haven’t had a recent preconception visit or if you have any medical problems, don’t be shy about pressing for an earlier appointment. And be sure to ask about starting a prenatal vitamin if you’re not already taking one. Also give your caregiver a rundown of any medications—prescription and over-the-counter—you’re
taking; the next six weeks are critical to your baby’s development, and some drugs aren’t safe now.

Your Growing Baby
The embryo has nestled into the soft lining of your uterus and will derive its nourishment from the yolk sac—yes, human eggs have them, too—until your placenta starts functioning next week.

The big news this week: The microscopic cells that will become your baby are multiplying and dividing at a dizzying rate, and a tiny, primitive heart is forming. From now until week 10, all of your baby’s organs will start to develop, and some will actually start to work. The next six weeks are the time when your baby is most vulnerable to anything that might interfere with his development—and the time when you need to be most careful about anything that might harm him. Meanwhile, the placenta is weaving its way into your uterine lining, gearing up for its job of siphoning oxygen and nutrients from your bloodstream to your baby’s and, in turn, dumping your baby’s waste back into your blood to be flushed from your body. Also present now: the amniotic sac, which surrounds your baby; the amniotic fluid, which cushions him; and the yolk sac, which churns out red blood cells and helps nourish your baby until the placenta is up and running.

What Other Women Say at 4 Weeks

“I just found out that we’re pregnant! I was only 12 days past ovulation but decided to test after I noticed some discharge the color of light coffee. Never in 20 years did I get my period that early. I thought, ‘Wow—maybe this is that implantation spotting everyone talks about.’” —Holly

“I just tested positive, and I’m finding that I’m more scared than happy. I’m just thinking of all the changes to be made in my life. I’ve been trying for 8 years, so this is pretty unbelievable.” —Kim

“I took a pregnancy test and got a negative, but I just knew I was pregnant. So I waited a few days and took another test at a different time of day. Sure enough, this time it was positive.” —Anonymous
Your Pregnancy: 5 Weeks

Your Changing Body

Pregnancy symptoms may make their debut this week. If you’re like most women, you’ll soon experience nausea and perhaps vomiting (and not just in the morning), sore breasts, fatigue, and a more frequent need to pee. All are normal, all are annoying, but the upside is that these complaints are all a part of being pregnant and won’t last forever. (If you’re one of the lucky few who has a symptomless or near-symptomless pregnancy, don’t fret about it—just enjoy it!) The outside world won’t see any sign of the dramatic developments taking place inside you—except maybe that you’re suddenly taking better care of yourself.

Your Growing Baby

Big news: Your baby’s heart, which has started to divide into chambers, begins beating this week, and cells for vital organs like her kidneys and liver are forming. Even so, your tiny embryo—no bigger than a sesame seed—is still very much a work in progress. She looks more like a tadpole than a

What Other Women Say at 5 Weeks

“I’m having all these symptoms already: My breasts are sore, I’m having terrible migraines, and I’m so bloated that I can barely put on a pair of my loosest pants. How could this be, so early in the pregnancy?” —Jessica

“I feel tired all the time, and my breasts feel like they weigh 12 pounds each!” —Anonymous

“If I have to pee one more time, I’m going to scream! It’s making sleeping really difficult, since I have to keep getting up.” —Steffie
human being, and her body is made up of three layers—the ectoderm, the mesoderm, and the endoderm—that will later form organs and tissues. The neural tube—from which your baby’s brain, spinal cord, and nerves will sprout—develops in the ectoderm, or top layer. This layer will also give rise to your baby’s skin, hair, nails, mammary and sweat glands, and tooth enamel. The heart and circulatory system appear in the mesoderm, or middle layer. The mesoderm will also form your baby’s muscles, cartilage, bone, and under-skin tissue. The endoderm, or third layer, will give rise to parts of your baby’s lungs, intestines, and urinary system, as well as her thyroid, liver, and pancreas. Primitive versions of the placenta and the umbilical cord are already hard at work.

Your Pregnancy: 6 Weeks

Your Changing Body

You may find yourself developing a bit of a split personality—feeling moody one day and joyful the next. Disturbing as this is (especially if you pride yourself on being in control), what you’re going through is normal and may even get more intense as your pregnancy progresses. Ricocheting emotions are caused partly by fluctuating hormones. But hormones aside, your entire life is about to change—and who wouldn’t feel emotional about that?

Your Growing Baby

This week’s major developments: The nose, mouth, and ears that you’ll be spending so much time kissing in eight months are beginning to take shape. If you could see into your uterus, you’d find an overlarge head and dark spots where your baby’s eyes and nostrils are starting to form. His emerging ears are marked by small depressions on the sides of his head, and his arms and legs by protruding buds. His heart is beating about 100 to 160 times a minute—almost twice as fast as yours—and blood is beginning to course through his body. His intestines are developing, and the bud of tissue that
will give rise to his lungs has appeared. His pituitary gland is forming, as are the rest of his brain, muscles, and bones. Right now, your baby is a quarter-inch long and about the size of a lentil.

Your Pregnancy: 7 Weeks
Your Changing Body
Your uterus has almost doubled in size in the last five weeks, and keeping food down may be next to impossible, thanks to morning sickness. (If you’re feeling fine, don’t worry—you’re lucky!) You probably need to use the bathroom a lot more than usual, too, thanks to your increased blood volume and the extra fluid being processed through your kidneys. (By the end of your pregnancy, you’ll have 40 to 45 percent more blood running through your veins to meet the demands of your growing baby.)
While your nausea may diminish during your second trimester (in about seven weeks), get used to making a beeline for the bathroom. Many women report that the need to pee is a constant part of pregnancy.

Your Growing Baby
The big news this week: Hands and feet are emerging from developing arms and legs—though they look more like paddles at this point than the tiny, pudgy extremities you’re daydreaming about holding and tickling. Technically, your baby is still considered an embryo and has something of a small tail, which is actually an extension of her tailbone. The tail will disappear within a few weeks, but that’s the only thing getting smaller. Your baby has doubled in size since last week and now measures half an inch long, about the size of a raspberry. If you could see inside your womb, you’d spot eyelid folds partially covering her peepers—which already have some color—as well as the tip of her nose and tiny veins beneath parchment-thin skin. Right now both hemispheres of your baby’s brain are growing, and her liver is churning out red blood cells until her bone marrow forms and takes over this role. She also has an appendix and a pancreas, which will eventually produce the hormone insulin to aid in digestion. A loop in your baby’s growing intestines is bulging into her umbilical cord, which now has distinct blood vessels to carry oxygen and nutrients to and from her tiny body.
Your Pregnancy: 8 Weeks

Your Changing Body
Though you haven’t gained much weight yet, parts of you are certainly growing—like your breasts. In fact, many women go up a cup size or more during pregnancy (the result of all the new milk-making machinery under construction as your body gears up to feed a hungry newborn), and much of this growth happens in the first trimester. Time to invest in a new bra! Some of the other changes you may be noticing now: Bone-deep fatigue as your body works overtime to create a new human being; gas as your digestion slows to a crawl under the influence of progesterone; and aversions to certain foods and pungent smells as your nose and taste buds go on high alert for potential toxins.

Your Growing Baby
New this week: Webbed fingers and toes are poking out from your baby’s hands and feet, his eyelids practically cover his eyes, breathing tubes extend from his throat to the branches of his developing lungs, and his “tail” is just about gone. In his brain, nerve cells are branching out to connect with one another, forming primitive neural pathways.
Though you may be daydreaming about your baby as one sex or the other, the external genitals still haven’t developed enough to reveal whether you’re having a boy or a girl. Either way, your baby—about the size of a kidney bean—is constantly moving and shifting, though you still can’t feel him.

Your Pregnancy: 9 Weeks
Your Changing Body
You still may not look pregnant (unless this pregnancy isn’t your first), even if your waist is thickening a bit. You probably feel pregnant, though. Not only are morning sickness and other physical symptoms out in full force for most women, but you may feel like an emotional pinball as well. Mood swings are common now; it’s perfectly normal to be ripping into your mate for leaving the toilet seat up one

What Other Women Say at 8 Weeks

“From morning to night, I feel like gagging. I don’t throw up, but I have a queasy stomach. I’d much rather hurl and get it over with.” —Stephanie

“I crush my prenatal vitamin and mix it with yogurt. So far, that’s been the only way for me to keep it down.” —Anonymous

“I have tingling nipples, and it’s driving me crazy!” —Steph

With the beginnings of facial features and fingers and toes, your baby is taking on a more human form now.

HOT TOPICS

• Genetic counseling (page 40)
• Chorionic villus sampling (page 43)
• Common sleep problems (page 59)
• Prenatal exercise (page 78)
• Why you’re so moody now (page 90)
minute and weeping over a sentimental commercial the next. Try to cut your-
self (and him!) some slack—it’ll be good practice for the months to come.
Emotional flip-flopping can persist throughout your pregnancy and well after
your baby is born. On the physical front, you may find yourself sweating
while others around you are shivering (yet another side effect of all the extra
blood pumping through your veins). Some women also notice that they sali-
vate much more than normal now, though the cause is a bit of a mystery.

Your Growing Baby
This week’s big news: Your baby—just under an inch long and about the size
of a grape—looks practically human for the first time! All of the standard
body parts are accounted for—though they’ll go through plenty of fine-tuning
in the coming months. Other changes abound: Your baby’s heart finishes di-
viding into four chambers, and the valves start to form—as do her tiny teeth.
The embryonic “tail” is completely gone. All of your baby’s organs, muscles,
and nerves are kicking into gear. The external sex organs are there but won’t
be distinguishable as male or female for another few weeks. Her eyes are fully
formed, but her eyelids are fused shut and won’t open until week 27. She has
tiny earlobes, and her mouth, nose, and nostrils are more distinct. The pla-
centa is developed enough now to take over most of the critical job of pro-
ducing hormones. Though your baby still weighs just a fraction of an ounce,
she’s poised for rapid weight gain now that her basic biology is in place.
Your Pregnancy: 10 Weeks

Your Changing Body

Before you got pregnant, your uterus was the size of a small pear. By this week, it’s as big as a grapefruit. Though you’re probably not yet ready for maternity wear, you may find that your regular clothes are becoming uncomfortably tight. That’s because your midsection is thickening (still due to slight weight gain and bloating) and your blossoming breasts are straining the seams of your bra. In these transitional weeks between regular and maternity clothes, pants and skirts with forgiving elastic waists (or low-rise waistlines that sit below your belly) will provide some much-needed comfort.

Your Growing Baby

Major news this week: If you have a prenatal visit scheduled, you should be able to hear your baby’s heartbeat during your appointment. The moment can be very dramatic, as the room fills with the sound of a galloping horse. It’s confirmation of the power of the new life you’ve helped create, and for many parents it’s an incredibly moving experience.

Other happenings: Your tiny baby, just the size of a walnut, is officially a fetus—meaning that most of his critical development is complete! He’s swallowing, moving (thanks to newly functional joints), and kicking up a storm. Vital organs—including his kidneys, intestines, brain, lungs, and liver (now making red blood cells in place of the disappearing yolk sac)—are in place and starting to function, though they’ll continue to develop throughout your pregnancy.

If you could take a peek inside your womb, you’d spot minute details, like tiny nails forming on perfect fingers and toes (no more webbing!) and peach-fuzz hair beginning to grow on tender skin.

In other developments: Your baby’s limbs can bend now, and his hands are flexed at the wrist and meet over his heart, and his feet may be long enough to meet in front of his body. The outline of his spine is
clearly visible through translucent skin, and spinal nerves are beginning to stretch out from his spinal cord. Your baby’s forehead temporarily bulges with his developing brain and sits very high on his head, which measures half the length of his body. From crown to rump, he’s about 1 1/4 inches long. In the coming three weeks, your baby will again double in size—to nearly 3 inches.

Your Pregnancy: 11 Weeks
Your Changing Body
If you’re like many women, you’re feeling a bit more energetic now and your nausea may be starting to wane. Unfortunately, you may also be suffering from constipation (caused by pregnancy hormones, which can slow digestion and lead to a bit of “clogging up”) and heartburn (pregnancy hormones yet again—this time they’re relaxing the valve separating your esophagus from your stomach). Just remember, all this suffering is for a good cause—you’re having a baby!
Your Growing Baby

Your baby, just over 1 1/2 inches long and about the size of a fig, is now almost fully formed. Her fingers and toes have separated, her hands will soon open and close into fists, tiny tooth buds are beginning to appear under her gums, and some of her bones are beginning to harden. As her body grows and becomes functional, she’ll start twisting, turning, kicking, and stretching as though she’s doing water ballet—cushioned and protected all the while by your amniotic fluid. You won’t feel your baby’s acrobatics for another month or two—nor will you notice the hiccuping that she may be doing now that her diaphragm is forming.

Your Pregnancy: 12 Weeks

Your Changing Body

By this point, your uterus is almost big enough to fill your pelvis. You might even be able to feel the top of your womb—called the fundus—above the middle of your pubic bone. (Hint: It’s around the top of your pubic hair.)
Luckily, your body is beginning to adjust to your changing hormone levels, and for even more women, morning sickness is finally becoming a thing of the past. (Queasiness can return periodically throughout pregnancy, though, and some unlucky mothers-to-be never get a break from it.)

Your Growing Baby
The most dramatic development this week: Reflexes. Your baby’s fingers will soon begin to open and close, his toes will curl, his eye muscles will clench, and his mouth will make sucking movements. In fact, if you prod your abdomen, your baby will squirm in response (though you won’t be able to feel it). His intestines, which have grown so fast that they protrude into the umbilical cord, will start to move into his abdominal cavity about now, and his kidneys will begin excreting urine into his bladder. Meanwhile, nerve cells are multiplying rapidly, and in your baby’s brain, synapses are forming furiously. His face also looks unquestionably human: His eyes have moved from the sides to the front of his head, and his ears are right where they should be. From crown to rump, your baby-to-be is 2½ inches long (about the size of a lime) and weighs half an ounce.

Finally, the beginning of a real “baby belly” as your uterus outgrows the confines of your pelvis and rises into your abdominal cavity. Maternity clothes, here you come!

At barely 2 inches long, your baby’s head is disproportionately large compared with his body; his forehead bulges with his developing brain, and his eyes are sealed shut. Still, there’s no question that his appearance is now distinctly human.
Your Pregnancy: 13 Weeks

Your Changing Body

Hooray! You’re at the end of your first trimester, and not only are your early-pregnancy complaints likely easing, but your long-lost energy and sex drive may finally be staging a comeback. Though birth is still months away, your breasts may have already started making colostrum, the antibody—and nutrient-rich fluid that feeds your baby for the first few days after birth, before your mature milk comes in. What’s more, your belly may soon be big enough to announce to the world that you’re expecting.

Your Growing Baby

This week’s big news: Your chance of miscarriage has dropped dramatically, now that your baby’s critical development is nearly complete. Go ahead and breathe a sigh of relief.

In other developments: Fingerprints have formed on your baby’s tiny fingertips, her veins and organs are clearly visible through her still-thin
skin, and her body is starting to catch up with her head—which makes up just a third of her body size now. If you’re having a girl, she now has more than 2 million eggs in her ovaries. Your baby is almost 3 inches long (the size of a jumbo shrimp) and weighs nearly an ounce.

**BabyCenter Buzz**

**What Other Women Say at 13 Weeks**

“Side sleeping has taken some getting used to. I’ve found that it’s easier to sleep in that position when I hug a pillow and wrap my legs around it.” —Clara

“I’m so sick of hearing ‘How are you feeling?’ I know most people are genuinely concerned, but man, I’m repeating myself over and over.” —Sara

“Yesterday I decided it was okay to finally blab our pregnancy news. What a great feeling. My husband and I have been keeping this secret for two months!” —Anonymous
Symptoms You Should Never Ignore in the First Trimester

Fortunately, most women get through their first trimester with only run-of-the-mill aches, pains, and other problems. But just to be safe, don’t hesitate to call your caregiver if you have any of these symptoms:

• Severe or persistent abdominal pain or cramping
• Vaginal bleeding or spotting (Note: If you’re bleeding or have severe pain of any kind and can’t reach your practitioner, head straight for the emergency room. And if you are soaking through several sanitary pads in an hour, in excruciating pain, having trouble breathing, or feeling “shocky” or like you might pass out, dial 911 right away.)
• Leaking fluid or watery, mucousy, or bloody vaginal discharge
• Discharge that’s foul-smelling, frothy, or yellow, green, or gray
• Itching, burning, or other discomfort in the vagina or surrounding area
• Little or no urination
• A painful or burning sensation when you urinate
• Severe or persistent vomiting or vomiting accompanied by pain or fever
• Chills or fever of 101°F or higher
• Coughing up blood
• Persistent, severe leg cramps or calf pain that doesn’t ease up when you flex your ankle and point your toes toward your nose
• Trauma to your abdomen from a fall, blunt-force impact like a car crash, or physical abuse
• Sudden, “explosive” headaches, a headache that doesn’t go away, or any headache accompanied by blurred vision, slurred speech, or numbness
• Fainting, dizziness, heart palpitations, or a racing or pounding heart
• Breathlessness that comes on suddenly or is severe and accompanied by other symptoms (including worsening asthma, rapid breathing or pulse, pain, pallor, a bad or persistent cough, or a sense of apprehension)
• Severe constipation accompanied by abdominal pain, or severe diarrhea that lasts more than 24 hours
• Any health problem that you’d ordinarily call your practitioner about—even if it’s not pregnancy-related (like a cold that gets worse rather than better)