

PREGNANCY MILESTONES

The Positive Pregnancy Test

Having a baby is a big deal! Am I ready? Are we ready?

Morning Sickness

Welcome to morning sickness, the confirmation of the pregnancy test.

First Prenatal Appointment

Hearing your midwife or doctor say the words, "You're pregnant."

Telling Someone You're Pregnant

When you decide to share your pregnancy announcement, you can be sure it's a milestone.

End of the First Trimester

Having the first trimester behind you says so much. One big issue is that for most people the risk of miscarriage drops drastically. This means you can really enjoy the pregnancy and quit worrying as much. There is also the aspect of the "fun" parts of pregnancy as yet to come. Gone are the days of morning sickness without the benefit of the belly showing.

Buying the First Thing for Baby

Some families have beliefs about when it's appropriate to buy something for the new baby. This means that they won't buy anything before the baby is born, other families start buying right away. But buying a new outfit for a baby or even purchasing a piece of furniture for the baby's room can be a huge milestone.

Hearing Baby's Heart Beat

This is one of my favorite milestones. Hearing the baby's heartbeat is so neat. It sounds so different than one might expect, and yet it's so beautiful. I don't find this ever gets old. It's a sign that the baby is doing well, that your pregnancy is on track. Be sure to take someone with you to experience this joy together.

Wearing Maternity Clothes

Don't laugh but wearing maternity clothes is a milestone. In fact, many first time moms try to rush this one. They can't wait for the external proof that they are pregnant. (The problem with rushing it is that you don't realize that eventually, you can't stand your maternity clothes!)

Having a Stranger Notice Your Pregnancy

Notice I didn't say have a stranger touch your belly, while that may happen, it is not a milestone. But having a random person acknowledge your belly or ask when you're due can be a lot of fun. (Assuming you really are pregnant!)

Feeling the Baby Move

Feeling those first few flutters is amazing. You might even spend a few days trying to guess if that's what you're feeling or not. Whether you describe it as gas, butterflies or bubbles, you'll love these baby kicks and flips.

First Pregnancy Craving

Don't laugh, but realizing how badly a craving can strike and the crazy stuff you may want, it's a bit fun when you realize that a pregnancy craving is a real thing. Within reason, enjoy this craving and indulge as appropriate.

Finding Out If You're Having a Girl or Boy

Whether you find out early in pregnancy, or at birth, hearing the words, "It's a..." will forever change your life. There are lots of ways to find out and many ways to celebrate..

Someone Else Feeling the Baby Move

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Taking a Childbirth Class

Your childbirth class is a lot of fun, but it's also a sign that things are moving along. You probably won't start your class until at least halfway through your pregnancy, usually finishing near the beginning of your third trimester. Both the start and finish of your class signal that your baby's birthday is getting closer, and now you're ready!

Start of the Third Trimester

While nine months seems like a really long time around week four when the test shows positive, the truth is the time can really fly very quickly. Many moms note that the beginning of the third trimester is a real shock for them when they realize, two-thirds of their pregnancy is already over.

Your Baby Shower

If you're having a baby shower or blessingway, it can be a real treat. This celebration of your journey and of your baby-to-be can really help you solidify that pregnancy is nearing an end and that your journey towards motherhood is really barreling at you. It's fun to share these moments with family and friends and who doesn't love a good party?

Finishing Baby's Room

Whether you have an official nursery or baby has a corner in your room, declaring your home to be ready is a big step. All the planning and decisions that can go into what you need and how you'll arrange things is much bigger than most parents imagine.

Midnight Ice Cream Run!

Okay, so even if it's not a pregnancy craving, have a midnight date night run for ice cream. Take the time to sit up and eat your treat and talk about how your life will look once you have your baby with you.

Switching to Weekly Appointments

Prenatal care just sort of chugs along. You show up, ask your questions, get answers and make another appointment for some number of weeks away. All of a sudden, they tell you that you should look at the next week's calendar. Wait, what? That's right, after about 36 weeks into your pregnancy, you'll see your doctor or midwife just about every week. (My advice is to book a few appointments ahead to get the best spots.)

Finishing Your Birth Plan

As the end of your pregnancy nears, you'll want to finish your birth plan and send it off to all of the relevant people. Once you do this, you may really feel like this baby may show up after all. (Be sure to keep copies for yourself!)

Your Due Date

Welcome to your due date! I hope you've planned a celebration that is worthy of this 40-week wait. While you may still have a couple more weeks to wait, the truth is that your baby could be born any day. He or she is simply working on some fine-tuning of brain and lung development and will be in your arms shortly. Celebrate this milestone with dinner out, a pedicure, or something else fun.
End of the First Trimester

VACCINATION

Before pregnancy:

MMR vaccine (get one month or more before pregnancy, unless you're already protected)

During pregnancy:

Tdap vaccine (to help protect against whooping cough)
Flu vaccine (if pregnant during flu season)

After pregnancy:

It's safe to receive vaccines after giving birth, even while you are breastfeeding