

A Dad's Guide To Pregnancy In Guy Terms

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An Overview of the Guy's Guide to Pregnancy

Nine months is a really long time. This is particularly true when the pregnancy isn't physically happening inside of your body. It can be hard to relate to the aches, pains and morning sickness. Heck for most guys the pregnancy isn't even very real feeling until the latter months when you can feel the baby from the outside.

This guy's guide to pregnancy is designed to take you from month to month in this pregnancy calendar showing you fetal development and making suggestions on how to be involved in pregnancy. Here's to an amazing nine months!

1) First Month of Pregnancy

This first month of pregnancy is when pregnancy occurs. This is the fun part! Shortly after you have sex and conception occurs, changes start to happen in her body.

As the dad, you're probably blissfully unaware of the microscopic changes that are taking place in mom's body until she makes the big pregnancy announcement. Though you might also be the type of dad who actually helps her take the pregnancy test. No matter where you fall in the mix, be sure that you put forth a supportive effort, even if you're a bit shocked yourself.

At the end of this month, just as the pregnancy tests are turning positive and she's missed her first period, your baby is about the size of the eye on the King of Hearts. Isn't it amazing how something so small can bring about such change?

2) Second Month of Pregnancy

Your baby's heart will begin to beat early on this month, but it's still too soon to hear it though it may be seen in an early ultrasound. Though an early ultrasound is usually only done if mom is experiencing complications.

What may be more noticeable to you are the symptoms of pregnancy that are outwardly visible. These symptoms of pregnancy can include:

- Bigger, more sensitive breasts
- Morning sickness
- Extreme fatigue

The baby is growing bigger this month and very quickly. By the end of the month, your baby will be about as big as the tip of a golf tee. She or he has fingers and toes, but they are still too difficult to count because of their size and shape.

3) Third Month of Pregnancy

Your baby is definitely getting bigger. Though the uterus is still fairly small and tucked into the pelvis. Mom might have a small pooch showing from other intestinal pregnancy symptoms.

At your prenatal visit towards the end of this month, you will get to hear the baby's heartbeat. This is one prenatal appointment that you won't want to miss. If you absolutely can't be there, have mom or someone record the sound of your baby's heartbeat for you.

A golf ball is a good visual representation of your baby's size this month. While not quite as solid, nor as hefty, your baby takes up a lot more space this month. The

bones in his or her body also become harder. The brain, eyes, and ears are all growing and forming external structures.

4) Fourth Month of Pregnancy

Your baby wiles away the day by turning somersaults in utero. Every 45 minutes or so your baby also relieves its bladder into the amniotic fluid. Teeth buds are all formed and you can see the hair pattern that your baby will have on the scalp. Your baby is still curled up a bit, about the size of a shuttlecock. And just like the shuttlecock has a heavier head, so does your baby.

Mom is generally feeling much better now that the pregnancy is into the second trimester. She is much more relaxed and less worried about the risk of miscarriage. She's also physically not as tired or sick from early pregnancy symptoms. This makes her easier to be around.

5) Fifth Month of Pregnancy

The big news this month is that many moms will have an ultrasound that can reveal if your baby is a boy or a girl. While this was determined at the moment of conception, it is not accurately seen via ultrasound until this point in pregnancy. This is another can't miss prenatal appointment.

Your baby is moving around a lot with plenty of room and mom may actually be able to feel baby moving. It is still a bit early for you to feel the baby's movements.

Maternity clothes might also start becoming a necessity. If not, mom is at least raiding your closet for some larger shirts.

Baby is about the size of a soft ball when curled up. Your baby is covered in a fine hair called lanugo covering the body and finger prints are visible.

6) Sixth Month of Pregnancy

Vernix, a cheesy like substance, covers your baby's skin. This helps protect the baby's skin from amniotic fluid. Most of the vernix will disappear by birth, depending on what point in pregnancy your baby is born. Speaking of which, you should know the signs of preterm labor just in case mom misses them. This is very different than the Braxton Hicks contractions that she may be noticing.

Your baby is starting to really lengthen out. At about a pound and a half and about 12 inches long, your baby is about the length of a large hockey blade (That's the bottom part!).

7) Seventh Month of Pregnancy

Childbirth classes are a must and hopefully you've started them by now. If not, help mom get a move on it. These will help you in feeling confident in how to best support her when baby's birth day arrives.

As you move into the third trimester, the best news for you this month is that you can now feel baby moving! Sometimes you have to be patient and wait until baby moves, which can seem to take forever, but it's well worth the wait.

Maternity clothes are now all the rage in your home. Remember to compliment mom on how well she looks in a truthful way. Sometimes moms need a pick me up and guys might not be paying attention to that. Why not surprise her with an evening out where you do all the planning? Maybe even an evening in where you cook dinner and give her a foot massage or back rub?

Baby can hear pretty well now, though everything is a bit muffled. Melt mom's heart by reading, talking or singing to baby through her belly. Your baby is developing brown and subcutaneous fats to help stay warm after birth. This puffs baby's weight up to about 2 and a quarter pounds - about the size of a smaller soccer ball all curled up!

8) Eighth Month of Pregnancy

While mom's belly is growing larger, it can be hard to relate to how big the baby really is in there. Remember that you're also seeing the placenta and amniotic fluid. Think of the curled up baby as about the size of a football. Imagine how that feels in your arms.

Sometimes in these last months of pregnancy, mom becomes a bit obsessed with pregnancy. This is normal and it will pass. You can choose to call her on it or let it slide. This may mean that she wants to talk about baby names or even what labor and birth will be like for you both. A doula can really help relieve the fears concerning the birth. Dads often say that having a doula helped them focus on just being there for mom and not having to remember all of the ins and outs of labor.

9) Ninth Month of Pregnancy

Wow, it's already the end of pregnancy. This last part can be a long one, particularly with late pregnancy discomforts. Mom may suffer from fits of insomnia and exhaustion. Do what you can to help make her comfortable.

These last weeks are certainly busy ones. Mom is nesting - preparing for baby, sometimes frantically. This means that you are busy helping her get baby's room ready. You also need to ensure that you pack a labor bag just for you! Having concerns about being at the birth? You're not alone. Find an experienced dad to talk to or discuss it with your doula.

It's also a good time for a baby shower. This may include you or it may not. But, either way, expect to spend some time oooing and ahhhing over some baby stuff.

While it may look like mom has swallowed a basket ball, baby's size can really vary here at the end. The average baby size is about seven and a half pounds and 20 inches. And just remember, babies can't read calendars, due dates are just guesses. There will be slight differences in everyone's growth and fetal development. Any problems should be reported to your practitioner.