

Growing Together

36 weeks

Your Baby

Your baby now looks even more like a little person. The added weight makes her arms and legs look chubby. Her skin looks healthier and smoother because body fat has filled in the wrinkles.



It is likely that your baby has gained almost 1 pound in the last 2 weeks. She now weighs about 5 to 7 pounds and is about 19½ inches long from head to toe.

- She still has *vernix* (coating on her skin) but the *lanugo* (fine body hair) is almost gone. She may still have some on her back and upper shoulders.
- Some babies have a head full of hair, while others have only a few wisps. Thick hair at birth does not always mean thick hair later on.
- You may notice your baby's movements are slowing down. She has herself tucked in a position that helps her to fit, but there's not much extra space to move around.
- Your partner and family can easily see your baby's movements on the outside when she moves a leg or an elbow. Everyone likes to imagine and talk about what your baby looks like.

Changes in You

You may be uncomfortable at this point in your pregnancy:

- Most women find that walking any distance is hard. Pressure on your diaphragm can make it hard to breathe.
- Your lower pelvic area may feel heavy as your baby gains weight and begins settling down in your pelvis.

- As the day goes on, your ankles may become swollen. Wear comfortable shoes that you can slip into without having to use your hands. Bending down to tie or buckle shoes can be hard with a baby in the way.
- “Practice” contractions are getting stronger. These are normal and will continue until your body goes into labor.
- This can be a very emotional time. You may be wondering: What will labor be like? Will I be a good parent? How will I know what to do? What will life with a baby be like?
- Take time with your partner to talk about your concerns. If this is your first baby, this is new for both of you.
- There is a lot of support available for you and your partner after your baby is born. Take some time now to think about who can help you and how they might be helpful to you. Writing it down before you give birth will make it easier for you to remember it later.

Questions?

Your questions are important. If you have questions about your baby’s growth and your changing body, talk with your healthcare provider at your next clinic visit.