

Pregnancy Changes

Physical Changes

- Your breasts will get larger and firmer. The areolae or dark areas around your nipples will get darker and may develop bumps in them. Veins in the breast may become more noticeable. At the 4th or 5th month your nipples may start giving off a clear or cloudy liquid.
- You may have to urinate (empty your bladder or pass water) more often. However, this may lessen during the middle months of pregnancy and then become more frequent toward the end of pregnancy.
- You may feel sick to your stomach during the first half of your pregnancy (see Morning Sickness). Sometimes this is worse in the morning. Also, you may feel heartburn (a burning sensation in your chest). These discomforts can be helped by eating smaller meals and eating more often. For example, rather than eating three regular meals a day, try six small meals each day. Also try to snack on plain crackers (without butter) especially early in the morning before getting out of bed. Try getting more rest and drinking very hot or very cold liquids. For heartburn, try not to lie down for at least one hour after eating.
- Your moods may change. It is not unusual for a pregnant woman to feel happy one minute then sad soon after without an apparent reason.
- You may get tired more easily.
- You may notice pulling pains in your lower belly and hip areas. These are usually caused by the growth of your uterus.
- Your belly will get larger as your baby grows inside.
- You may notice skin changes such as stretch marks or striae (pinkish lines on your breasts or belly) later in the pregnancy and some brown blotches on your face. Creams, lotions or oils do not prevent these changes. However, after pregnancy the marks tend to fade and are less noticeable.
- You may get constipated and have to strain to have a bowel movement. Hemorrhoids (large blood vessels near the opening in your rectum) may develop. Constipation is best prevented or relieved by including more fiber in your diet. Foods such as fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and bran cereal are often helpful. Do not take laxatives unless this is first discussed with your physician. Surfact is stool softener that is fine to take during pregnancy.
- You may experience changes in your legs such as cramps and possibly develop enlarged blood vessels (varicose veins).
- You may get acne and body hair increase. These are usually normal results of changes in the body's hormones during pregnancy.

What should I do if any of these changes happen?

If they are bothering or worrying you, don't hesitate to let the doctor

know at your next visit. If you need it taken care of sooner, call.