

Growing in the Womb

This page of our website contains a chronicle of fetal development with special attention being paid to the size of the unborn child. However, regardless of how small the fetus is, one thing is abundantly clear—it is very much human.



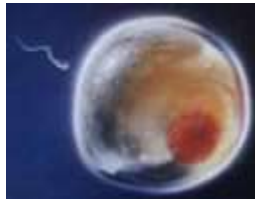
Day One:

Development begins on the day of fertilization.

A pregnant woman may notice her first missed menstrual period at the end of the second week after conception, or about four weeks after the first day of her last normal period.

There are different kinds of urine tests for pregnancy. Some may not be accurate for up to three weeks, or five weeks after the first day of your last normal period.

2 weeks: (4 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



By the 25th day, the heart begins to beat.

- The human embryo is about one-hundredth (1/100) of an inch long.
- Implantation began the first week and continues.

4 weeks: (6 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



- The embryo is about one-sixth (1/6) of an inch long.
- By the end of the first month, the embryo has a head and a trunk.
- Structures that will become arms and legs, called limb buds, begin to appear.

- The heart, now in a tubular form, begins to beat by the 25th day.

6 weeks: (8 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



- The embryo is about half an inch long and has a four-chambered heart.
- Electrical activity begins in the developing brain and nervous system.
- The fingers begin to develop.
- The embryo has nostrils.

8 weeks: (10 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



- The embryo begins to form arms, legs, hands, toes and a face
- The embryo is about one and one-fifth (1 1/5) inches long.
- The head is about half the size of the embryo.
- The beginnings of all key body parts are present, although they are not completely developed or positioned in their final locations.
- The embryo has ears, fingers, and toes.

10 weeks: (12 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



The fetal heart beat can be detected electronically.

- The fetus is about two and one-half (2 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The fingernails are developing.
- Between 8 and 10 weeks, the fetus begins small, random movements, though they are too slight to be felt yet.
- The fetal heart beat can be detected electronically.

12 weeks: (14 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



The doctor can often tell you if the fetus is a boy or a girl by special tests.

- The fetus is about three and one-half (3 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus is able to swallow, and the kidneys are able to make urine.
- A doctor may be able to tell you if it's a boy or a girl by special tests.
- Blood begins to form in the bone marrow.

14 weeks: (16 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



- The fetus is about four and three-fourths (4 3/4) inches from head to rump.
- The head is erect and the legs are developed.

16 weeks: (18 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



The fetus can kick, swallow, and sleep.

- The fetus is about five and one-half (5 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The ears stick out from the head.

20 weeks: (22 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



The fetus has been moving for several weeks. Now the woman begins to feel these movements.

- The fetus is about seven and one-half (7 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus has fingerprints, and may have some head and body hair.
- Although the fetus has been able to move for several weeks, movements, known as "quickening," are now felt by the pregnant woman.

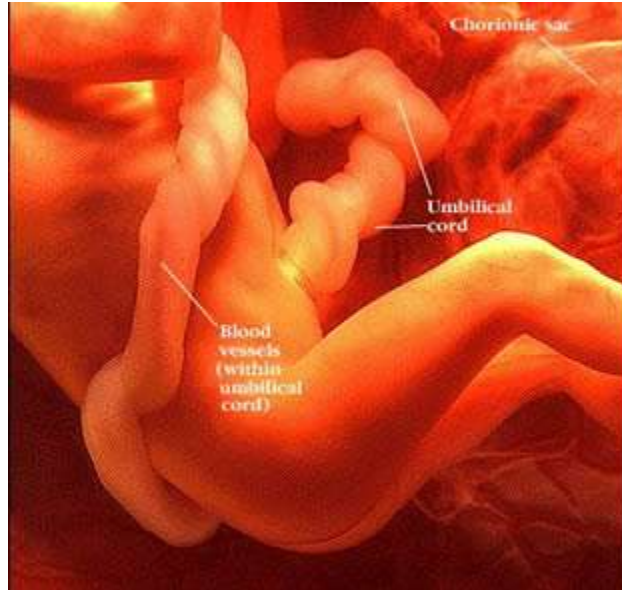
24 weeks: (26 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



About 4 out of 10 babies born now will live

- The fetus is about nine (9) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus can respond to sound.
- About 4 out of 10 babies born now will live.

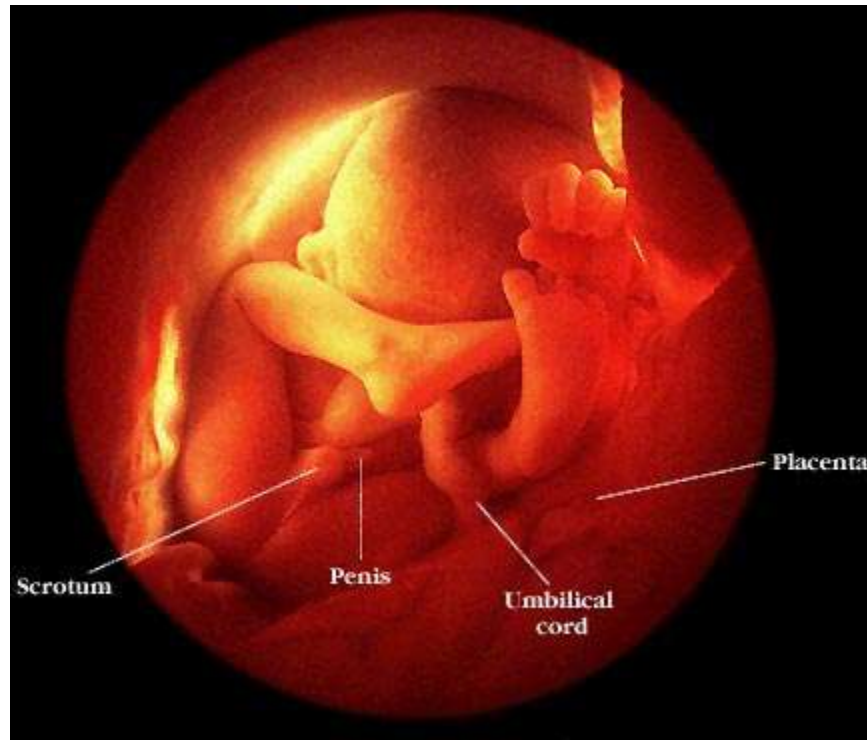
28 weeks: (30 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



At 28 weeks, the fetus has lungs that can breathe air

- The fetus is about ten and one-half (10 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus has lungs that are capable of breathing air, although medical help may be needed. The eyes are open.
- About 9 out of 10 babies born now will survive.

32 weeks: (34 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



- The fetus is about eleven and three-fourths ($11 \frac{3}{4}$) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus can grasp firmly
- Almost all babies born now will live.

36 weeks: (38 WEEKS after the first day of last normal menstrual period)



- The fetus is about thirteen and one-half (13 1/2) inches from head to rump.
- The fetus can grasp firmly.

38 weeks: (40 WEEKS after the first day of the last normal menstrual period)



The baby has reached full term and is ready to be born

- The fetus is about fourteen (14) inches from head to rump, and may be 20 inches or more overall.
- The baby is full term and ready to be born.