

Fourth month of pregnancy

It is the beginning of the 2nd trimester (4th, 5th, and 6th months), a time of growth. It is the phase when the pregnancy may start to become visible to others.

What happens during the fourth month?

By the end of this month, your child will be about six inches tall and will weigh around four ounces. In the fourth month, the nervous system, genitalia, and reproductive organs are fully developed. The heart is beating fast and is audible through the instrument called a Doppler. Eyelids, eyelashes, hairs, and nails are all formed during this month. The bones of the child start to become denser. During the fourth month, the child makes lots of movements, including stretching, yawning, sucking on his/her thumbs, and even making faces. But these movements are still too mild to be felt by the mother.

Measures to take

Now the genitals can be distinguished by an ultrasound. Thus, your doctor will be able to say if you are expecting a girl or a boy. At this time, the uterus is almost the size of a fist. The pregnancy starts to show, though it differs from woman to woman.

If one has not given blood to test for Down Syndrome or Edward Syndrome, then this is the time to do it.

In many countries, the fourth month (before the end of 16 weeks) is the time limit given to qualify for maternity benefits. Hence it is essential to have all the necessary medical examinations done by then.

By the fourth month, many early signs of pregnancy will start to subside. Thus, for many, morning-sickness may not be a problem anymore. But now the newer and different kinds of signs begin to emerge. As the uterus grows, issues of heartburn and constipation may become troublesome. The breast may change in size, and the darkening of the areola will continue.

There may be other unpleasant signs of hormonal changes and increased blood flow like stuffiness of the nose, nosebleeds, and bleeding from the gums. Some women may already start feeling shortness of breath, as well.

It is a time to buy loose clothes.

It is essential to understand that now you have to eat for two lives, thus you must eat regularly, maybe every 2-3 hours. Choose healthy snacks, including fresh fruits (avoid packed juices), milk, yogurt, cheese, sandwiches, or a bowl of soup.

Preventing constipation in pregnancy

The primary reason for constipation in pregnancy is the increased level of the hormone progesterone in pregnancy, which relaxes all the smooth muscles, including the intestines. This means slower bowel movements. In fact, three out of four women will experience constipation at some point during pregnancy.

Therefore, pregnant women should make sure that they have around 30 grams of dietary fiber each day. Thus, choose whole grain cereals for breakfast or anytime during the day. Choose brown rice. Eat lots of

fruits and vegetables in four to five portions a day. Make a routine to start your day with a warm glass of water; this will help the digestive system make a good start in the day. Do not forget to drink plenty of fluids during the day, a combination of water and fresh juices.

About the author:

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Dr. Preet is a family physician. He has been practicing medicine for the last 15 years and has a particular interest in maternal and child health. He understands the importance of a healthy pregnancy and its long-term effects on a child's health. He is also a passionate writer.

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