

Fifth month of pregnancy

Now, you are half way through your pregnancy, and your baby is sucking on its thumbs and moving more often.

What happens during the fifth month?

It is a time when the fingerprints and footprints are formed. The baby is now often sucking its thumb. It is also the month when many women first feel the movement of the child. In fact, at this stage the baby is able to hear outside noises. Your tummy will start becoming more visible, and the breasts will also change in size. Thus, make sure that you wear loose clothes, and wear a bra of the right size.

Measures to take

It is a time when your doctor will offer to do a scan to exclude any developmental anomalies and confirm the position of the placenta. Interestingly, at this time, hiccups may also be visible on the scan. This scan will also give more details about fetal health, such as heartbeat and general growth.

It is also a time when your doctor may prescribe you the hormone progesterone, if you have a history of pre-term birth or if blood tests show that you have a low level of the hormone.

How much weight will you gain?

Most women will gain somewhere between 11.5 to 12.5 kg during the pregnancy. There is enormous variability among women in this, so do not worry if you are not gaining enough weight. During the 2nd trimester, most women put on anything between 1-2 pounds of weight each week. Generally, underweight women gain more weight during pregnancy as compared to overweight women.

How to deal with cramps?

During pregnancy, there are higher chances of developing painful leg cramps. Worst of all, they often occur either late in the evening or at night. The best way to get rid of them is just to stretch the cramping muscles. It is a good idea to start doing some exercises for the feet like bending (while seated) and holding the toes of your feet. Another way is to massage the cramping muscles gently. Finally, if the cramps are too severe, then use an ice pack (e.g., Pack of frozen vegetables) to prevent night cramps and try to keep the legs and feet warm.

Gentle exercise

Being active will keep you fit and make it easier for you to adapt to the physical changes in pregnancy. Thus, it is a good idea to do exercises of the abdominal muscles and the pelvic floor, but be sure to avoid strenuous activities. If you do not feel like doing an exercise, try to walk more often. You should not exhaust yourself while doing an activity, since as the pregnancy progresses, breathing may become more difficult for you. Thus, the simple rule is that you should be comfortably able to talk while doing exercise.

How long one should exercise depends significantly on the physical capacity of the person. If you were inactive before pregnancy, start with exercising for just about 15 minutes per day and slowly increasing to a maximum of 30 minutes per day. Generally, doing exercise four times a week is enough.

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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