

## **Pregnancy**

Being pregnant is a profound responsibility for women, especially first-time mothers, who may feel excited and frightened as they nervously and hopefully anticipate a new baby. At the moment of conception, the genetic traits are determined, as is the gender. As the fertilised egg develops, the placenta also develops quickly. This is the most important organ, which transfers nutrients from mother to baby.

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In the first four weeks, the embryo begins to form, but it is still as small as a sesame seed. During the next month, internal organs develop, and the baby grows to the size of a small pea. By three months, thumbs, fingers, and toes have become noticeable and may even move. This is also when sexual organs appear and develop, whilst the circulatory system becomes complete. The doctor can now measure the foetus's pulse.

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Each day sees change, as the baby's organs are gradually perfected. The mother begins to feel stirring and then, occasionally, kicking from the tiny feet. It is remarkable to see a baby develop from a sesame seed to, when the birth is imminent, an average weight of 2.8 to 3.5 kg.

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When are a baby's genetic traits determined?

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How big is the embryo at the end of four weeks of growth?

When can the baby's pulse be measured?