

# The First Trimester

The first trimester (or first 3 months) is a critical time in the baby's life. It's a time of rapid growth and development. It's also a time when the baby is most susceptible to such hazards as smoking, drugs, and x-rays.

1 days

The sperm and ovum unite.

7 to 10 days



The fertilized ovum becomes implanted in the lining of the uterus. The placenta begins to form.

2 weeks



The embryo is now a layered disc on the uterus wall. The mother misses her menstrual period.

4 weeks

0.4 g (0.01 oz)



The beginnings of the embryo's eyes, ears, nose, spine, digestive tract, and nervous system are present. The tube for the future heart starts beating.

8 weeks

22-24 mm (1in)

1 g (.036oz)

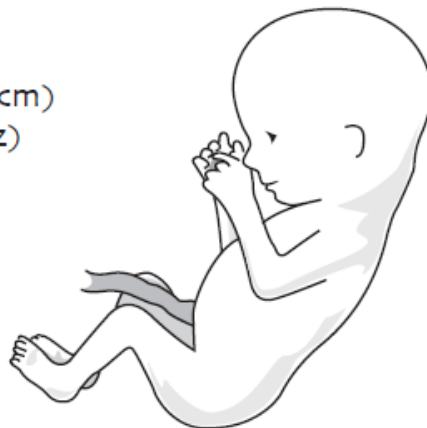


The fetus now has all the organs that a full-term baby would have. The heart is functioning. Bone formation begins.

12 weeks

9 cm (3.5 cm)

15g (1/2 oz)



The baby's sex can be distinguished. "Baby" teeth buds are present. Fingernails and toenails are forming. Immature kidneys secrete urine to the bladder. The fetus can now move in the amniotic fluid, but can't be felt by the mother.

\* adapted from *Baby's Best Chance*, 5th Edition, Province of B.C.