

## The Third Trimester

During the third trimester, or the last three months of pregnancy, the baby could survive if delivered before full term, but would need special care. The closer to full term, the more ready the baby is to cope with the birth process and to exchange the shelter of the uterus for life in the outside world.

28 weeks  
35-37 cm (14in)  
1100g (2 lb 5 oz)

The baby's body is still lean, but the skin is less wrinkled and red. The baby can now store iron, calcium, and other nutrients.

32 weeks  
40-42 cm (16in)  
1800-2100 g  
(4lb -4lb 7 oz)

The baby's skin is pink and smooths out as the fat forms under it. The baby develops a sense of taste. The baby becomes aware of sounds outside the mother's body. The male baby's testicles begin descent into the scrotum. The pupils in the baby's eyes can react to light.

36 weeks  
45-47 cm (18in)  
2200 - 2900 g  
(4lb 11 oz - 6 lb 5 oz)

The baby's body is rounded and usually plump. The downy hair on the baby's body begins to disappear. The baby's blood has a high concentration of hemoglobin (this may occur as early as 28 weeks). The baby's skin is smooth, pink and covered with a greyish-white cheeselike substance (vernix). The baby continues to increase the store of maternal antibodies and thus, resist some diseases.

40 weeks  
45-55 cm (18-22 in)  
3200 g + (7 lb +)

Head hair is usually present. The testes of male babies are now in the scrotum, and the labia majora of female babies are now developed.

\*Adapted from Baby's Best Chance, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Province of BC