

# Understanding pregnancy and the three trimesters

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## UNDERSTANDING THE TRIMESTERS OF PREGNANCY: Discussing the Importance of the 1st Trimester Due INTRODUCTION

The miracle of childbirth is only the last part in a complex and essential process that makes up the 40 weeks that make up the duration of the average pregnancy. The weeks of pregnancy are broken into three separate trimesters, each one playing an important role in the development of the offspring growing inside a mother's womb. While all three trimesters are uniquely imperative to the offspring's development; the first trimester, in many ways sets the tone of the child's development in-utero; like a foundation of the other trimesters that will follow. The 1st Trimester encompasses the time from the moment of conception to 13 weeks and many experts feel that the 1st Trimester is the most crucial, because it is at this stage that body structure and organ systems are designed (The Regents of the University of California, 2014).

## DISCUSSION

During the first two weeks the woman is not technically pregnant, not yet. Conception actually occurs about two weeks after the end of your last menstrual cycle. By the 3rd week fertilization is achieved. At this point the offspring is called a zygote and is made up of the base 46 chromosomes that will account for many of the baby's future traits, including gender. Week four begins the process called implantation. From here the zygote is now referred to as a blastocyst, which is a ball of multiplying cells. This is also when the placenta begins to prepare itself (Vishton, 2013). Week five begins the embryonic stage of development. The brain, spinal cord, and heart begin to form; inner and exterior skin layers develop, as well as, certain amounts of connective tissue. Week six marks the closing of the neural tube and the

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embryo's heart begins to beat independently and buds protrude from the embryo's body, which will become arms and legs. The seventh week sees vast changes in the embryo; head develops, including eye sockets, ears, and facial features begin to be defined. However, with all of this change the embryo is no bigger than the end of a pencil's eraser. During the 8th, 9th, and 10th week the eyelids, fingers, toes, lips, straightening of the torso, and rounding of the head can be seen. By the 11th week the embryo is now a fetus. Red blood cells are forming and genitalia will begin to form. In the 12th week fingernails are forming and the fetus's profile is clearly human. At this stage the fetus is only, approximately, 2 ½ inches long and weighing a ½ of an ounce (Mayo Clinic, 2014).

Through the definitive 1st Trimester it is not just the baby-to-be that is going through massive developmental changes; the mother is also going through serious physiological, biological, mental, and emotional changes as her body prepares itself for the pregnancy. The 1st Trimester is often marked by exhaustion for some, massive energy for others, as well as, nausea, vomiting, and terrible and unpredictable mood swings. The first trimester is one of the most significant; it is the stage when what the mother consumes can have the most developmental damage and can produce unfortunate occurrences like miscarriage are most likely to occur (The Regents of the University of California). For this reason the consumption of alcohol, drugs, caffeine, and foods high in sugar can all have negative side effects for your child. Mothers-to-be should eat healthy foods and beverages, invest in prenatal vitamins to supplement their diet, and make certain to make and attend regular doctor visits. The 1st Trimester of pregnancy is incredibly important and most certainly the health and wellness, mental, physical, and <https://assignbuster.com/understanding-pregnancy-and-the-three-trimesters/>

biological is essential to both mother and developing child (Mayo Clinic, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

While all of the 3 Trimesters are significant to the producing of a healthy, happy, bouncing baby, it is the 1st Trimester that sets the tone and blueprints of everything that is to come after it. How the mother cares for herself directly affects her baby and how it will develop and grow; which is pretty essential in the grander scheme of things. In the end, from conception to birth, the development and arrival of children is a miracle, a biological wonder, and scientific fascination; it is also a very sensitive, finite, detailed, and complex process that must be taken seriously and for the betterment of the children being carried.

## REFERENCES

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