

Emotional changes for your partner

- Your partner may worry about many things in pregnancy. They may worry about the health of their baby and their partner, their ability to be a good parent, finances and their ability to be a part of the birth. These worries may cause your partner to be moody too.
- Your partner may be jealous of the attention that you are receiving. Attending prenatal visits and learning more about pregnancy will help with these feelings. Talk with your partner about these feelings.
- Some partners may feel that sex will injure the baby. In most healthy pregnancies sex will have no effect on the health of the baby. Discuss this with your partner and health care provider. Sexual intimacy can create a feeling of closeness between partners.
- Mood swings in both partners may pose a challenge and should be discussed.
- Expectations about, and reactions to, a mom's changing body during and after pregnancy, need to be discussed.



Coping with emotional changes *in pregnancy*

- Learn as much as you can about normal emotional changes in pregnancy.
- Talk about your emotions with your partner, your health care provider and other pregnant women.
- Keep a pregnancy journal about your pregnancy and the feelings you are experiencing.
- Be sure to get enough rest—fatigue can make your concerns seem worse.
- If sexual intercourse is not appealing, continue to touch, cuddle and be close.
- If you are feeling overwhelmed, find some time to take a break and pamper yourself.
- If you feel that the emotional changes you are experiencing are not normal, discuss your concerns with your health care provider.



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Emotional changes *in pregnancy*



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Emotional changes for *pregnant* women

First trimester

- Excitement about the pregnancy and a feeling of accomplishment and relief that you can get pregnant, especially if getting pregnant has taken awhile.
- Ambivalence about the pregnancy, or not being sure you want to be pregnant. This can occur even with planned pregnancies.
- A sense that the pregnancy is not real and you are not really pregnant —“there must be a mistake!”.
- Mood swings—one minute you may be happy and the next minute crying about things that normally do not affect you.
- Changes in sexual feelings. Many women are nauseous and worry about a miscarriage. This can decrease the interest in sexual intercourse. A massage or gentle touching may provide sexual intimacy.
- Dreams, fantasies and nightmares may occur. You may dream about what your baby looks like, or you may dream about problems with your baby. Dreaming brings fears to the surface, helping you to get rid of them. Try not to interpret these dreams or consider them predictions for the future.
- At the end of this trimester you may be less anxious about miscarriage and able to enjoy your pregnancy more.



Second trimester

- Mood swings continue, but normally decrease as the second trimester continues.
- Forgetfulness—you may be so involved with your pregnancy changes that other things seem unimportant.
- A feeling of excitement that the pregnancy is real as you feel the first movements of your baby and hear the heartbeat.
- Feeling fat is common until you really look pregnant.
- Dreams, fantasies and nightmares continue.
- You may want sex more often. This can occur for many reasons: nausea has passed, worry over miscarriage has decreased, increased blood flow to the vagina and pelvis can make your orgasms more intense.



Third trimester

- You may worry about labour, delivery and your baby. This worry may make dreams and nightmares more common.
- You may experience mood swings as people continue to ask you when your baby is due.
- You may be impatient for the pregnancy to end. You may feel a sense of loneliness that you will soon be separated from your baby.
- You may feel a sense of urgency to have everything ready for the birth of the baby (make extra food, prepare the nursery, clean the house, etc.). Pace yourself.
- Fatigue and your increasing size can make sex less interesting. Couples can experiment with different sexual positions if sexual intercourse is desired.



Who experiences emotional changes in pregnancy?

Women and their partners experience emotional changes in pregnancy. Pregnancy is a time of change. Changes occur in relationships, energy levels, lifestyles, hormones, and concerns for the future. These changes can be exciting and sometimes worrisome. Emotional changes are experienced by many pregnant women and their partners and are considered normal.