

Third Trimester
Week 40

Length	Weight	Size
20.16in	7.63lb	 Small pumpkin

Education

Common Symptoms:

Snoring, nosebleeds, losing the mucus plug, contractions, water breaking

Symptoms Explained!

Snoring and nose bleeds. Most moms-to-be experience some changes in their breathing during pregnancy, and you might be snoring more than usual as you approach your due date. This could be because hormonal changes can cause your nasal passages to dry out. If snoring or nosebleeds are a problem for you or your partner, try using a humidifier in your bedroom or sleeping with nasal strips across your nose.

Losing the mucus plug. During pregnancy, this plug sealed off your cervix to prevent bacteria from entering your uterus. When you go into labor — or even a few days or weeks before — you'll lose this plug. You might not even notice it but, if you do, it can look like a pinkish, bloody, or clear discharge.

Contractions. You may have felt Braxton Hicks contractions earlier in your pregnancy, but you'll know it's the real deal when your contractions hit at regular intervals and come more and more frequently. Another way to tell true labor contractions from the false variety is that true labor contractions will not subside when you move or change positions.

Water breaking. This happens when the amniotic sac surrounding your baby ruptures, releasing the amniotic fluid. It can be one of the signs of labor at 40 weeks pregnant. Your water can break several hours before labor starts or even once labor has begun.

At 40 weeks pregnant, your baby could arrive any day, but they might also wait a couple more weeks.

Your baby's head has likely dropped lower into your pelvis, and his body is curled up tightly. If your baby is in a breech position (rump down), your provider may attempt to turn them by placing firm pressure on your abdomen. If that doesn't work, your provider may discuss the possibility of a cesarean delivery with you.

Types of delivery:

Vaginal birth

If you're having a vaginal birth, when the time comes you'll go through three stages of labor before you get to meet your baby.

During the first stage, which includes two phases called early and active labor, your cervix will start to open by stretching and thinning. At this stage you'll feel contractions that start out in your back area and move towards your belly. These contractions move your baby lower down into the birth canal.

Although each woman's labor experience is different, some moms-to-be can be in the early labor phase for as many as 14 to 20 hours before progressing to active labor, which is when the cervix is dilated about 6 centimeters.

Active labor may last between four and eight hours.

It's not uncommon to spend most of early labor at home; your healthcare provider will be able to give you personalized advice as to when you should head to the hospital. When you start to notice the early signs of labor, try to make the time as relaxing as possible.

Once your cervix is fully dilated (10 centimeters), you've made it to the second stage of labor. This is when you will be encouraged to push to help move your baby through the birth canal and out into the world.

Finally, after you deliver your baby, you'll reach the third and final stage of labor. This is when you'll deliver the placenta. You'll probably still feel contractions as the placenta detaches from the uterus and comes out, but this stage is usually quicker and less uncomfortable than delivering your baby.

Cesarean section

You may have a scheduled cesarean section, or your healthcare provider may decide that a c-section is the best course of action once you're already in labor.

For a cesarean delivery, you'll first be given anesthesia to numb you before surgery. Then, after being prepped for surgery, your doctor will make an incision in your abdomen and uterus and remove the baby and placenta manually.

If your c-section is planned, it's likely that your partner will be allowed in the operating room with you during surgery.

Potential Labs

Urine test, blood pressure check, measurement of your uterus, position of the baby, biophysical profile, GBS testing, cervix dilation, and a check of your baby's heartbeat

Questions to Ask Your Provider

What can I expect for postpartum recovery and healing?

What is diastasis recti?

What are the signs of postpartum depression?

At this stage, do you recommend waiting or inducing labor?

What, if anything, can you do at home to jumpstart labor? Can castor oil help induce labor?

Is it safe to have sex so close to your due date?

What should you do if you notice changes in how much your baby is moving?

What should you expect in terms of postpartum recovery? Are there any postpartum symptoms you should contact your healthcare provider about?

How soon after giving birth can you start breastfeeding? (If this is something you would like to do.)