

First trimester

Weeks 0 to 12

Congratulations on your pregnancy!

The **first trimester** marks the beginning of an exciting and transformative journey for you and your baby/ies. From early symptoms to essential checkups and preparations, this stage lays the foundation for a healthy pregnancy.

Yikes, my body is changing!

So much happens during the first trimester of pregnancy as your body undergoes several changes. Your breasts may become more sensitive, fuller and tender, with darkening of the areolas and enlarged nipples. You might feel more tired than usual and experience frequent urination as the growing uterus puts pressure on the bladder. Some women gain up to 2.5 kg in weight during this time, while others may lose weight due to morning sickness. Morning sickness, including nausea and vomiting, often occurs between weeks three and 17, though its severity varies widely among women. Fluctuating hormones may lead to mood swings, which are completely normal during this stage.

Tiny, but mighty

During the first trimester, your baby is busy growing all their bones, muscles and major organs – the building blocks of life! By the 12-week checkup, you might get to hear that amazing little heartbeat, and by the end of the trimester, your baby will start looking like a tiny, perfectly formed human.

Bumpy beginnings

The first trimester is an exciting and important time to lay the foundation for a healthy pregnancy. Now is a good time to make a to-do list. Start by visiting your doctor to confirm your pregnancy and choose the healthcare provider (doctor, gynaecologist, or midwife) who will support you throughout. Your first antenatal visit should happen during this time, where you'll have your first ultrasound and even discover if you're expecting multiples. Begin taking prenatal vitamins as prescribed and fuel your body with a balanced diet – your growing baby relies on you for all their nutrients.

It's also wise to start planning ahead financially. Whether you're newly pregnant or trying to conceive, budgeting early can ease future stress. Babies come with a long list of needs – think clothes, nappies, a pram, and a car seat. Lastly, once you're nearing the end of the first trimester and everything looks good, it's usually a great time to share your happy news with loved ones!

Belly Babies

Belly Babies delivers pregnancy care and childcare to your home

By registering for the Belly Babies online programme on www.bellybabies.co.za, you will have access to expert antenatal and postnatal support in the comfort of your own home through:

- an online antenatal course consisting of a comprehensive collection of videos, presented by various experts within the maternity field;



- an online face-to-face consultation with a highly qualified lactation (breastfeeding) specialist, to help you and your baby establish and maintain a happy breastfeeding routine. You can book your personal consultation through the Belly Babies online platform; and
- a follow-up online face-to-face consultation with a lactation specialist, if needed.

Belly Babies' services are paid for by the Scheme. However, you must be enrolled on the Maternity Programme to access this benefit.

Hello Doctor is always available, anytime and anywhere

Hello Doctor is an application that offers you access to expert telephonic medical advice from qualified South African medical doctors through your phone, tablet or computer, at absolutely no cost to you!

Download the Hello Doctor app



Enjoy this special time and savour each moment of your first trimester – every milestone is part of the incredible journey of bringing new life into the world. Imperial Motus Med wishes you good health, happiness, and all the best as you continue your pregnancy journey!



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