

Normal Breast Changes in Pregnancy

During your pregnancy, you may have breast changes. This happens because of pregnancy hormones. Women often have these changes early in their pregnancy and may even have changes after pregnancy. Breast changes vary from woman to woman and will happen whether you choose to breastfeed or not. Here are some common changes you may have during your pregnancy.

Trimesters

1 Week 0-13

- Your breasts feel tender and fuller because pregnancy hormones are making parts of the breast grow.
- Your breasts become bigger. Your breasts begin to grow early in the pregnancy and continue throughout the pregnancy.
- You start to see veins more easily on your breasts. This is due to the increased blood volume that happens during pregnancy.

2 Week 14-27

- Your areolas (the area of dark skin around the nipples) become larger and darker. This will make it easier for the baby to find the breasts when born.
- Small glands develop on your areolas. They are not painful and look like little bumps. They release a clear oil on your areolas and nipples. This oil smells like amniotic fluid (the fluid that surrounds the baby in utero) so the smell of the breasts will be familiar and comforting to the baby.
- Your nipples may start to leak colostrum during this time. Moms start to make colostrum as early as week 16 of pregnancy and can start producing milk if the baby is born early.

3 Week 28-40

- Your breasts continue to become heavier and larger while your nipples may continue to get darker. Wear a comfortable, supportive bra to help with any back pains.
- Some moms get stretch marks on their breasts due to the fast growth that happens. Applying lotion or cream to the breasts can ease dryness or itchiness due to the skin stretching. You do not need to put any creams or lotions on your nipples or areolas.

4 Birth to the First 6 Weeks

- Your breasts begin to swell and feel fuller due to milk production usually between days 3 and 5 after having the baby. Even if you do not plan to breastfeed, your body makes milk.
- Your breasts may become softer around the third week after delivery, especially if breastfeeding has been going well.
- Your breasts and nipples may become more sensitive as your pregnancy hormones start to return to normal after delivery.

Breast and nipple changes do not affect a mom's ability to produce milk or breastfeed. If you are concerned about your breast changes or are not having changes during pregnancy, contact a lactation consultant or your health care provider. They can evaluate the situation. Breast assessments during pregnancy are helpful for women who are planning to breastfeed their babies. The 24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline is available to all mothers who have questions regarding breast changes and breastfeeding. Call 1-800-833-4642.

Arizona WIC | 24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline 1-800-833-4642

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