Saskatchewan Literacy Network

Prenatal Caring Circle

Promoting Family Literacy, Attachment and Well-Being Before and After Birth

Second Edition - 2017

COMMUNITY

FAMILY

FRIENDS

Hey Mom! You may not know about me yet. If you do, talk to your health care provider. She will tell you when I will be born.

Hi Mom! It's the end of week four. I'm called an embryo. Many of my organs, like my heart, are starting to form.

My brain is the size of a grain of salt. My brain cells are forming.

Our Circle of Support

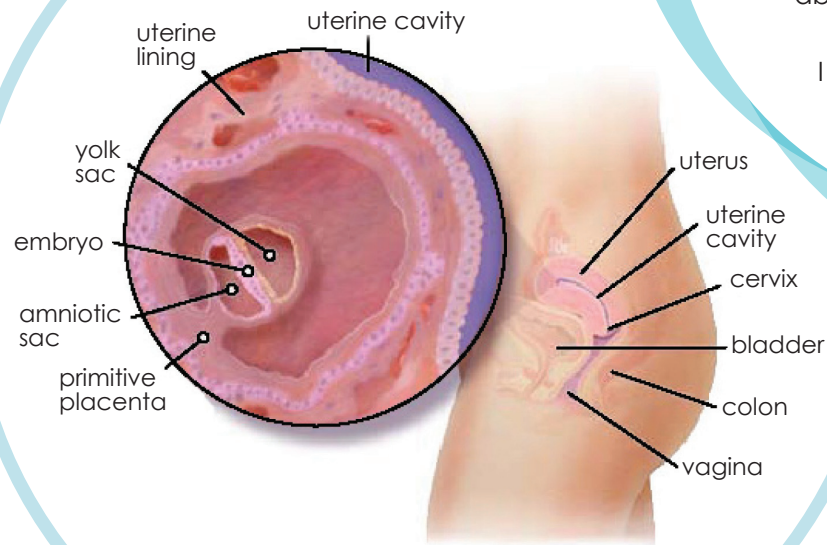I have a lot of different feelings about being pregnant.

I could tell a few people close to me about my baby. It's good to have someone to talk to.

I can ask someone to help me find a health care provider.

uterine cavity

uterine lining

yolk sac

embryo

amniotic sac

primitive placenta

uterus

uterine cavity

cervix

bladder

colon

vagina

Weeks 1 to 4

(First Trimester)

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll take time to talk about my feelings with you.

Hi Mom!
I'm a fetus now.
I'm the size of a blueberry.
My hands and feet look like little paddles.

My heart is beating.
My blood is flowing.
My teeth are starting to grow.

Wow, my brain is really growing. It is starting to control my muscles.

Our Circle of Support

I can ask someone to go to my health care provider with me.

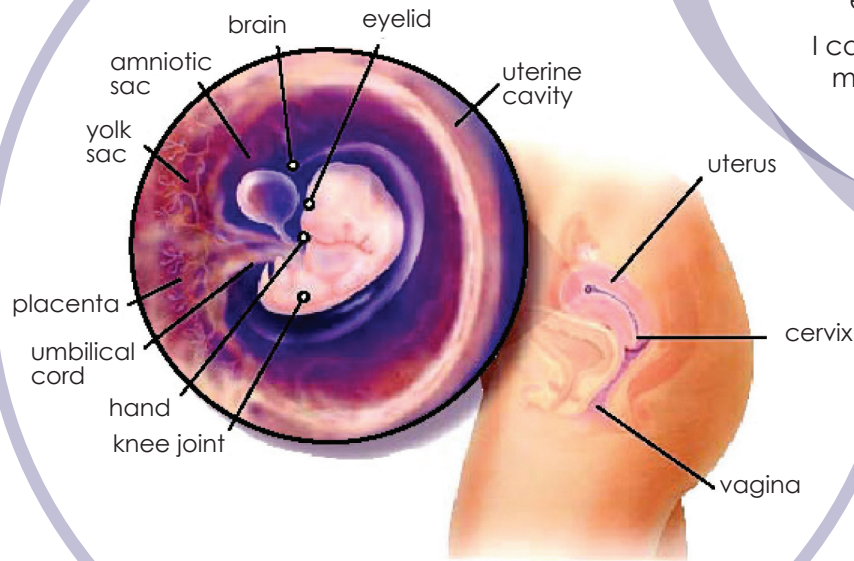I will ask about the food I need to eat to have a healthy baby.

I can talk to someone I trust about my feelings and changes in my body.

amniotic sac
brain
eyelid
uterine cavity
yolk sac
placenta
umbilical cord
hand
knee joint
uterus
cervix
vagina

Weeks 5 to 8

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll find an outdoor space to practice stillness. I will use all of my senses, (hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling and tasting) to describe the world to you.

Hi Mom! It's me again. I can do so much now. I can kick and curl my toes. I can smile. I'm practicing how to breathe.

Thanks Mom for the clean air and the good food. They come in through my placenta and umbilical cord.

My forehead is quite large. I have 250,000 new brain cells, called neurons, every minute.

amniotic sac

eyelid

ear

umbilical cord

placenta

uterus

cervix

vagina

Our Circle of Support

This is a good time to decide who I would like in my Circle of Support.

I will get enough sleep at night to feel rested.

I will talk to others about our needs.

Weeks 9 to 13
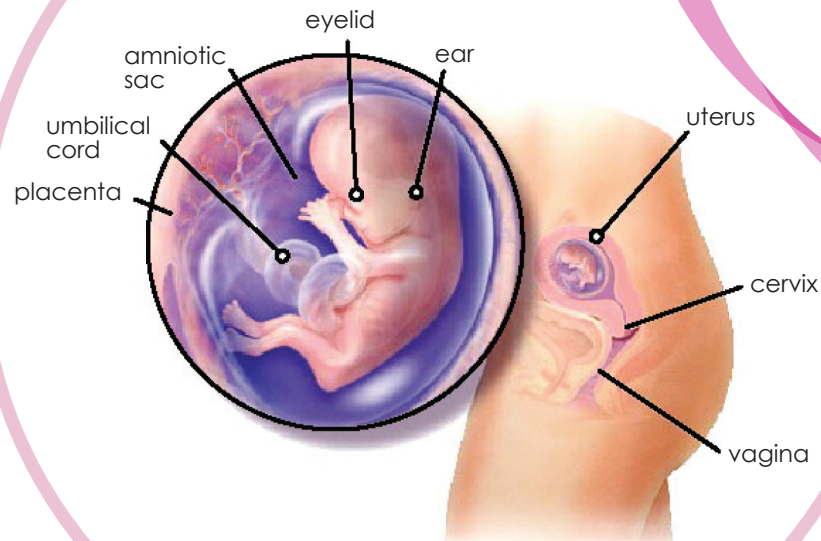
Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I may ask someone from my culture to teach me one new thing. Someday I'll teach you about our culture.

You may feel me move this month. It may feel like fluttering butterflies.
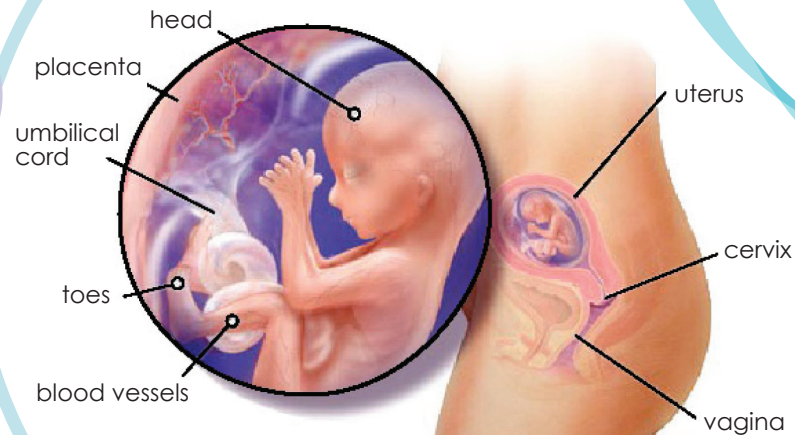
Yeah! We've reached the second trimester. All my organs and body parts are formed. Now they need to grow.

Mom, my eyes and ears are beginning to connect to my brain. I love it when you laugh and talk to me!

Our Circle of Support

I will ask people to become my Circle of Support.

I will ask someone to go grocery shopping and pickout nutritious food with me.

I can ask someone in my Circle about some of the changes going on in my body.

head

placenta

umbilical cord

toes

blood vessels

uterus

cervix

vagina

Weeks 14 to 17

(Second Trimester)

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll learn a new song and practice singing it to you. I will use it to calm you after you are born.

My bones are getting hard now. Hey, I can feel with my fingers. I can suck my thumb. I can swallow.

Mom, when you and others talk and read to me I jump for joy!

My brain is growing fast. I have millions of brain cells or neurons. I can hear your voice.

Our Circle of Support

I will ask someone about when they were pregnant.

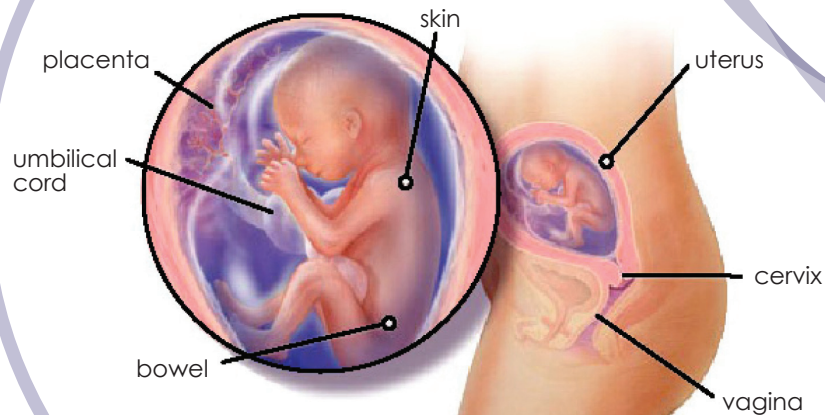I will ask someone in my Circle about taking a prenatal class with me and being my birth coach.

I will ask people in my Circle to talk to the baby.

placenta

umbilical cord

skin

bowel

uterus

cervix

vagina

Weeks 18 to 22

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll try a new fruit or vegetable from a garden, grocery store or farmers' market. Someday you will try this food too!

Our Circle of Support

I just want to hear your voice. I am starting to remember things like voices and songs.

Hi Mom!
All my muscles are formed now. My bones and tooth buds are getting very hard. I have a really cute face now.

I now have folds in my brain to fit in all my brain cells.

I will ask someone in my Circle of Support to massage my aching muscles.

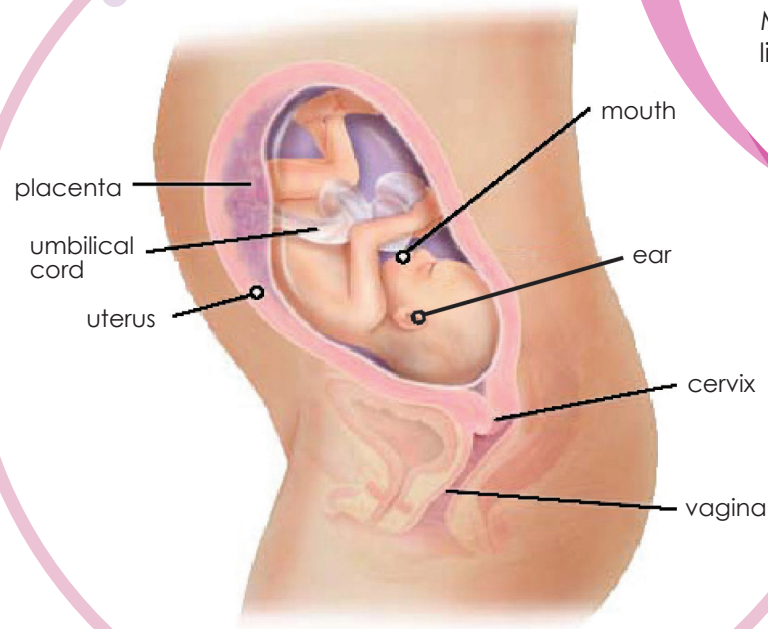Maybe I can find books or DVDs at the library that will help me understand my body changes.

I'll ask someone in my Circle to do a fun activity with me.

placenta

umbilical cord

uterus

mouth

ear

cervix

vagina

Weeks 23 to 27

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll plant some seeds. I'll explain to you what I am doing. Someday you might help me take care of our plant.

I love listening to you read to me. Songs and rhymes are fun to hear too.

This month I'm going to exercise a lot. Sorry if I kick you and punch you. Also, I'm trying out my new lungs. So...you may feel me when I hiccup.

You may notice that I move and then I'm quiet. Just like you, I need exercise and rest.

placenta

umbilical cord

uterus

fat

cervix

vagina

Our Circle of Support

I will ask my Circle to help me with my Baby Arrival Day plan.

I will ask someone in my Circle to exercise with me, maybe go for a walk.

I will encourage everyone to share happy thoughts with my baby.
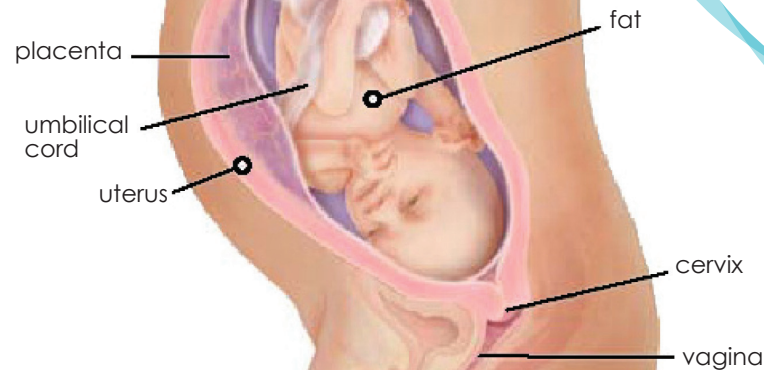
Weeks 28 to 31

(Third Trimester)

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll listen to a new type of music. I'll use the radio or borrow a CD from the library.

I really listen when you tell me about what you are seeing, hearing, doing and feeling.

I'm putting on more weight. It sure is getting crowded in here! I'm still moving around, but my kicks aren't quite as hard.

The seeing and hearing centers of my brain are well-developed.

Our Circle of Support

I can ask someone in my Circle to help me practice my visualization exercise.
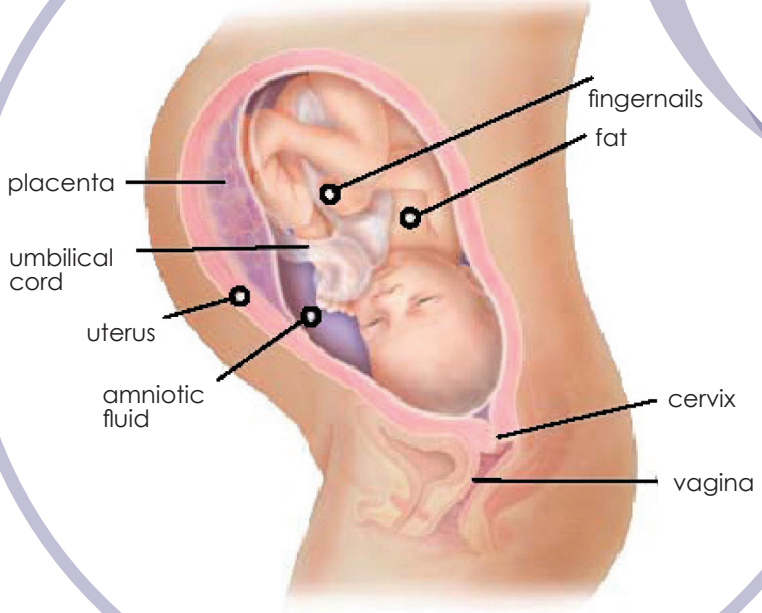
I can invite a friend to cook good food with me.

I can ask my Circle to sing to baby.

placenta

umbilical cord

uterus

amniotic fluid

fingernails

fat

cervix

vagina

Weeks 32 to 35

Month ....

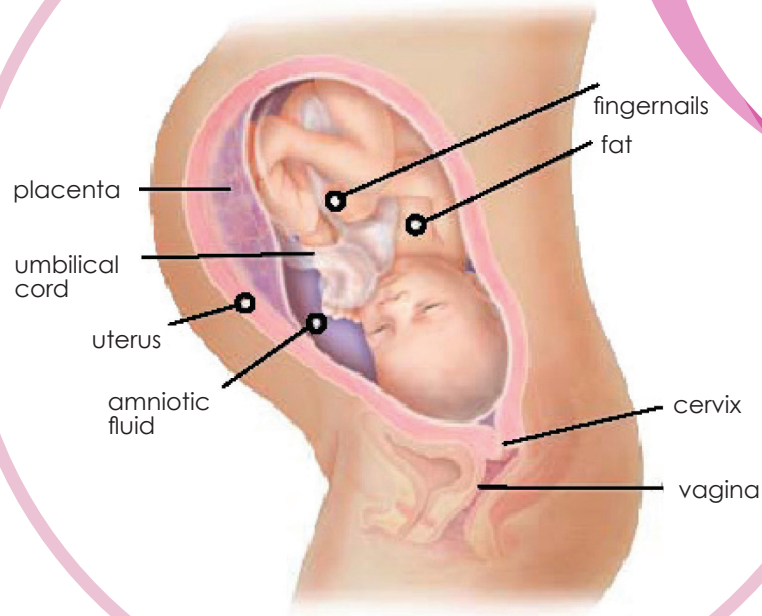| SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll share our family stories and history with you. You will grow up hearing them over and over.

Mom,
Soon we will meet each other. It's so exciting! I love hearing you talk about me, and hearing you talk to people in our family and Circle.

Hey Mom.
Any time after 37 weeks I'll be full term. I'm 7 or 8 pounds now. I may be more than 20 inches long. I'm strong and my body is ready.

When I'm born, I will have all the neurons that I need for my whole life.

Our Circle of Support

I can ask someone to help me pack my bag for the hospital.

I will remind my birth coach to be ready.

I can invite people to do some fun activities with me. Maybe we can learn a new game.

placenta

umbilical cord

uterus

amniotic fluid

fingernails

fat

cervix

vagina

Weeks 36 to 40

Month ....

| SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll visit a park, zoo, pet store or go for a walk in nature. I am excited to teach you about the natural world.

What's happening? I'm getting squeezed and pushed! Remember – breathe and relax. Think about holding me and talking to me when I'm finally here. I still need you to be close so I can hear and feel you.

I really like that calming music that you're playing. Mom, try some different labor positions. We may feel more comfortable.

Hi everyone! Are you excited? We're going to meet very soon. It may take a few days to get to know me and what I like. This is all new to me.
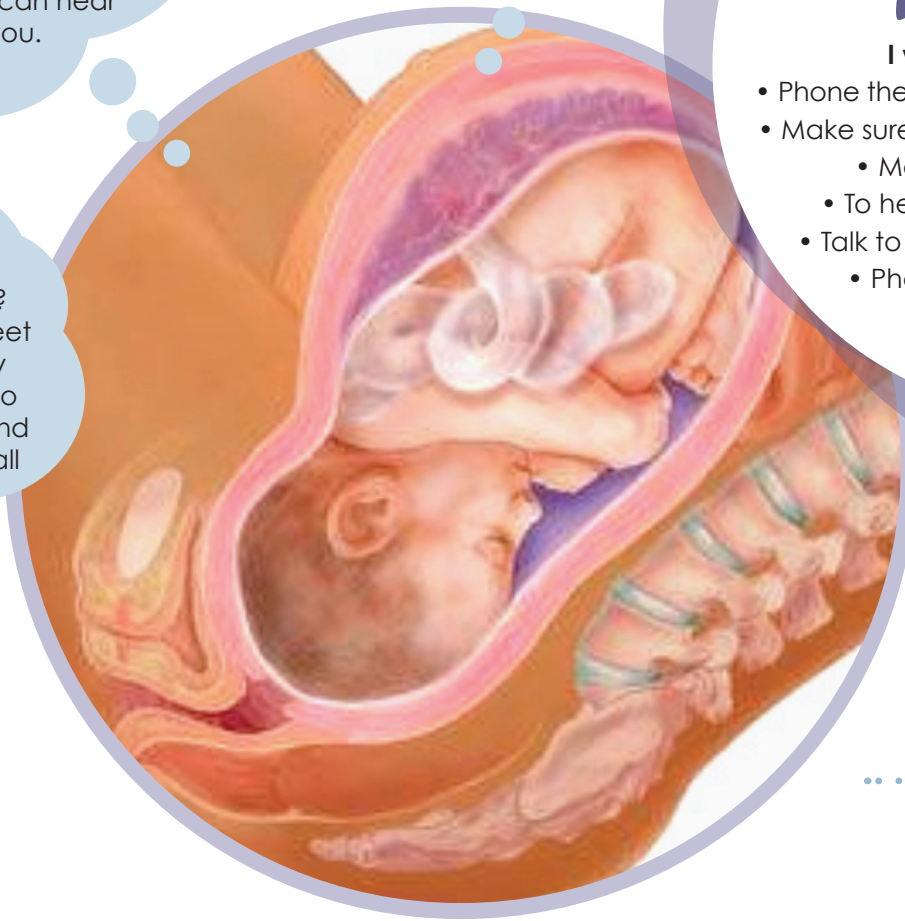
Our Circle of Support

I will ask my birth coach to:
• Phone the hospital to ask when I need to go in.
• Make sure the hospital staff has my birth plan.
• Massage my aches and pains.
• To help with breathing and relaxing.
• Talk to my health care providers for me.
• Phone people to let them know about the baby!

Labour and Delivery

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll focus on getting to hold you in my arms soon.

Our Circle of Support

FAMILY

FRIENDS

COMMUNITY

PLACE YOUR FAMILY PHOTO HERE

Hey family! In my first years of life the cells in my brain are growing fast. Hold me, swaddle me, rock me and touch me gently. Your love and attention helps them grow.

I will soon learn to:
• smile when you talk to me
• look at your face when you hold me
• lift my head when I'm on my tummy
• hold your finger

I love board and bath books. I'm learning to touch them, and look at the pictures. Please share them with me.

I will ask someone in my Circle to look after the baby while I do something nice for myself.

I will try to eat healthy, exercise, and get lots of sleep. Being a parent takes lots of energy.

I will let my Circle know that "reading" can mean any of the following:
• turning pages
• pointing to pictures
• labeling pictures

Months 1 to 3

Month ....

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Our learning journey:

I'll keep a journal about you and me, and how you are growing and changing.

Acknowledgements

Saskatchewan Literacy Network

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Please Note

This program does not provide any medical, labour or delivery advice or instructions. Participants are encouraged to attend prenatal classes.

For more information about the *Prenatal Caring Circle*, please contact the Saskatchewan Literacy Network at 1-888-511-2111.