40 weeks

Happy due date! If you haven’t delivered by now, that’s okay. When pregnancy goes past the due date, we may recommend additional monitoring, including an ultrasound once a week. Your health care provider may talk with you about scheduling an induction of labor.

By 40 weeks, your baby will weigh around 7½ pounds (about the weight of a small pumpkin).

Induction

- Inductions are not scheduled before 39 weeks unless there is a medical reason.
- Induction means doing something like breaking your water or using medication to start the labor process.
- Common medications used for induction include: Misoprostol (Cytotec) – a medication placed in the vagina that causes the cervix to soften.
  Oxytocin (Pitocin) – a medication given by IV to stimulate the uterus to contract.
- Induction of labor has risks, which may include an increased risk of C-section when compared to natural labor.

Caring for your postpartum body

- Plan to wear comfortable clothes that make it easy to breastfeed and care for a new baby.
- Don’t expect to fit into your pre-pregnancy clothes after you deliver. Your body has gone through a lot of changes and it’s going to take time to get back to normal.
- Your body is going to be sore from the stretching and pushing required to deliver your baby.
- During your hospital stay, we will provide a squirt bottle, Tucks pads, numbing cream or spray, and pads.
- Use the squirt bottle after using the bathroom and pat dry instead of wiping.
- Use the Tucks pads and numbing cream or spray as needed for the next few days following delivery.
- Avoid sex or placing anything in the vagina for 4 to 6 weeks to let your body heal.
- Your bleeding will get lighter over the next few weeks.

Call your health care provider for the following:

- If you soak more than 1 large pad an hour over 2 hours.
- If your discharge develops a foul odor and your belly becomes tender.
- If you develop a fever >100.4 degrees.
- If you have difficulty feeding your baby.

A postpartum appointment will be scheduled with your health care provider after delivery. Feel free to contact your provider if you have questions or concerns before your 6 week postpartum visit.