

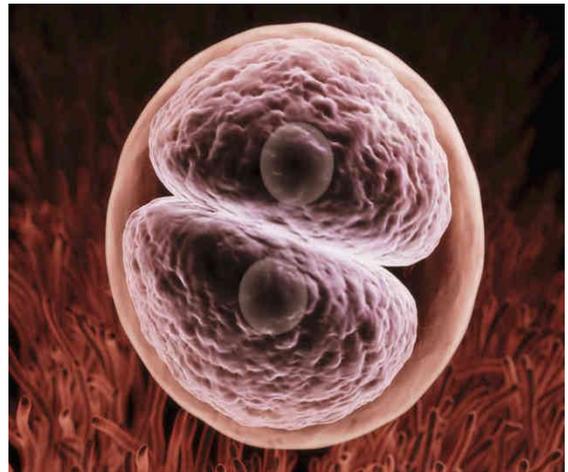
Milestones of Early Life

At no time in your life does more growth and change occur than in the first nine months before birth. Here are the amazing milestones of that time in your life.

Day 1

Conception: of the 200,000,000 sperm that try to penetrate the mother's egg cell, only one succeeds. At that very moment a new and unique individual is formed. All of the inherited features of this new person are already set – whether it is a boy or a girl, the color of the eyes, the color of the hair, the dimples of the cheeks and the cleft of the chin. He or she is smaller than a grain of sugar, but the instructions are present for all that this person will ever become.

The first cell soon divides in two. Each of these new cells divides again and again as they travel toward the womb in search of a protected place to grow.



Day 6—14 (Week 1+2)

The new individual at first attaches loosely on the wall of the womb, then burrows deeply and attaches securely to it over the next week. Sensitive pregnancy tests can now show positive, but this depends on the level of hormone produced by the new life. By the end of the second week, the mother's menstrual period is suppressed by this hormone (hCG) which is produced by her child.

Day 17 (week 3)

Blood vessels begin to form. Remarkably, the future sex cell that will give rise to the sperm or eggs for a new generation begin to group together only 17 days after this new life is alive itself.

Day 18-20 (Week 3)

The foundation of the brain, spinal cord and nervous system are laid.

Day 21 (Week 4)

The heart begins to beat, unsurely at first, gaining strength day by day. The heart beats 70 times per minute at first, reaching a maximum of 170-190 at seven weeks, and slowing a bit to 160-180 at 9 weeks. A day later the eye begin to develop. The earliest stages of the ears are now present.

Day 26-27 (Week 4)

The lungs begin to form.



An embryo at 4 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson

Day 28-32 (Week 5)

Two tiny arms make their appearance and budding legs follow two days later. The beginnings of the mouth take shape. The nose starts to develop. The thyroid gland begins to grow. Blood flows in the baby's veins but stays separate from the mother's blood. The tongue now begins to form. The face now makes its first appearance.

Day 36 (Week 6)

The baby's eyes develop their first color in the retina.



An embryo at 4 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson

Day 40 (Week 5)

The baby makes her [or his] first reflex movements. Touching around the mouth with a fine bristle causes her to flex her neck.

Day 41 (Week 6)

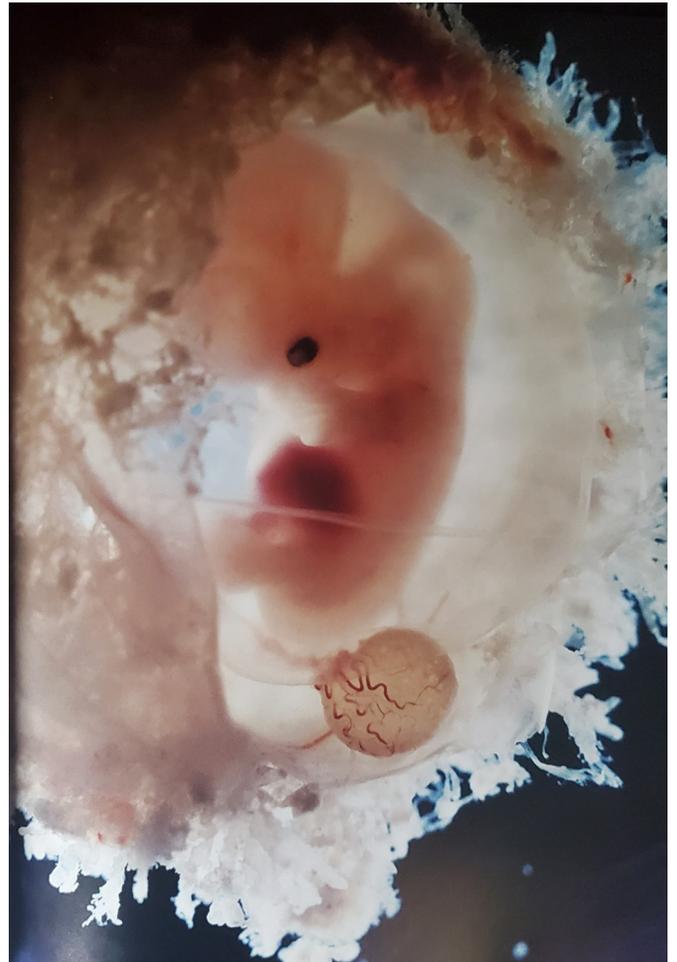
The fingers begin to form, followed by the toes a few days later.

Day 42 (Week 7)

The baby develops nerve connections that will lead to a sense of smell. The brain is now divided into 3 parts – one for hearing and one for seeing. Joints begin to form. Mother now misses second period.

Day 44 (Week 7)

Buds of milk teeth appear. Facial muscles develop. Eyelids begin to form, protecting the developing eyes. Elbows take shape. Internal organs are present, but immature. 99% of muscles are present; each with its own nerve supply.



An embryo at 5 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson



A 6 week ectopic pregnancy, Robert Wolfe



An embryo at 5 - 8 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson

Day 52 (Week 8)

Spontaneous movement begins. The baby then develops a whole collection of moves of the next 4 weeks including hiccupping frowning, squinting, furrowing the brow, pursing the lips, moving individual legs, head turning, touching the face, breathing (without air), stretching, opening the mouth, yawning and sucking.

Week 8

The baby is now proportioned, and about the size of a thumb. Every organ is present. The liver is making blood, the kidneys function, and the heart beats steadily. The skull, elbows, and knees are forming. Of the 45000 structures in the adult body, 4000 are already present. The Skeleton of the arms and legs and the spine begins to stiffen as bone cells are added.

Week 9

If prodded the baby's eyelids and hands close. Genitalia that were forming in the 7th week now become visible, indicating whether it's a boy or girl. However, the doctor will not be able to tell by ultrasound until the 12th to 20th week. Early muscular movements begin. The thyroid gland turns on.



An embryo at 8 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson



An embryo at 5 - 8 weeks photographed by Lennart



Ultrasound at 9 week and 2 days by Bonsais Brother



An embryo at 8-10 weeks photographed by Lunar Caustic

10 Weeks

Fingerprints begin their 7-week long formation. The fingernails begin to develop. The eyelids now fuse together until month 7, protecting the delicate eyes. The Number of connections between nerves and muscles has tripled since last week.

11 Weeks

The baby now “practices” breathing, since she [or he] will have to breathe air immediately after birth. The baby urinates. Her Stomach muscles can now contract. Vocal chords and taste buds form. She can make complex facial expressions and even smile.

12 Weeks

Fine Hair begins to grow on the upper lip, and chin, and eyebrows. The baby swallows and responds to skin stimulation.



A fetus at 12-13 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson

13 Weeks

The face is prettier and facial expressions may resemble the parents'. The baby is active, but mom doesn't feel anything yet.

15 Weeks

A wild production of nerve cells begins and continues for a month. A second surge will occur at 25 weeks.



A fetus at 16 weeks photographed by Lennart Nilsson

4 Months

Nostrils and toenails become visible. The baby may suck her [or his] thumb, turn somersaults and has a firm grip. The ovaries of girls contain beginning of eggs.

She begins to develop sleeping habits. At about 4 ½ months she is able to experience pain.

5 Months

The testes descend in boys. Mom may feel the baby kick, turn or hiccup and may be able to identify a bulge as an elbow or head. Each side of the brain has a billion nerve cells now.

6 Months

The baby will be able to hear by next week. The child sleeps and wakes, nestling in her favorite positions to sleep, and stretches upon waking up.

7 Months

The eyelids begin to reopen, preparing to see the outside world. Eyelashes have now become well developed.

8 Months

Skin becomes pink and smooth. The pupils of eye respond to light. Fingernails reach to the tip of the finger. The baby is really getting cramped now.

9 ½ Months

The child triggers labor and birth occurs, an average of 264-279 days after conception.

