

Emotional Changes in Second Trimester

You will most likely be thankful to leave the roller coaster of your first trimester behind. The majority of women find the second trimester to be a calmer, more emotionally stable time. The hormones of pregnancy are evening out a bit and you have most likely made some peace with your pregnant status. Some women find themselves feeling happy and lighter even as their bodies are getting heavier. In fact, the fact of being heavier is a relief for some women as they do not worry so much about miscarriage after the first trimester.

Most women don't experience nausea and/or vomiting after the first trimester - a huge mood-lifter. And psychologically, as you begin to look pregnant, you have a visual excuse for feeling and acting pregnant. Friends and relatives have more sympathy and are getting excited.

Sometime in this trimester, you will have definitive signs of your growing baby including hearing the heartbeat if you choose to monitor with a Doppler or Fetoscope, seeing your baby if you get an ultrasound, feeling your baby as he or she begins to kick and roll. You will most likely begin to think of your baby as a real person, may have pet names or start calling him or her by the name you have chosen, and start to form a relationship as you get ideas about who this little person is growing in there.

It is normal to still have feelings of concern for your health and safety as well as your baby's. Some of the earlier anxiety and trepidation may still remain, particularly if your living situation is less than ideal. Hopefully, these feelings are less intense than during the first trimester when they are heightened by hormone surges, etc.

Now that you can look in the mirror and see physical signs that you are very pregnant, it is common for doubts to surface again. Can you really add a baby into your already-busy life? Are you crazy to think you are ready to be someone's mother? Again, this is all normal. Major changes in our lives always bring up these types of questions and concerns, and it is good to look at them now rather than "saving" them until you are holding your new baby in your arms.

Another side effect of your pregnant body may be body image issues. Different women respond to being pregnant in different ways. Some feel worried about their changing body and feel fat and ugly. Others find a sense of freedom in being pregnant and report feeling sexier and more open than they ever have before.

We encourage you to try to enjoy this short time of being pregnant. You are joining a special club that your mother and grandmother joined before you. It is a wonderful chance for you to have a big beautiful belly in a society that doesn't normally appreciate big bellies - why not flaunt it?!

Resources:

Mayo Clinic Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy: The ultimate guide for parents, Harms, Dr. R; 2006, Harper Resource.
The Natural Pregnancy Book, Aviva Jill Romm; 2003, Celestial Arts Pub.
The Whole Pregnancy Handbook: An Obstetrician's Guide to Integrating Conventional and Alternative Medicine Before, During, and After Pregnancy, Evans, Joel M., OB/GYN; 2005, Penguin Publishing.
www.askdrsears.com/html/1/t010100.asp; (accessed January 8, 2006, 10:45 a.m.).