



Why Baby wants to stay in utero if he is healthy, till at least 39 weeks of pregnancy

- Preterm birth is a concern because babies who are born too early may not be fully developed. They may be born with serious health problems. Some health problems, like cerebral palsy, can last a life time. Other problems, such as learning disabilities, may appear later in childhood.



- A baby born before 39 weeks has an increased risk of breathing problems.
- A baby born before 39 weeks is more likely to experience low body temperature and low blood sugar levels.
- A baby born before 39 weeks is more likely to experience feeding problems.
- Babies born early have more learning and behaviour problems in childhood than babies born at 40 weeks.
- Preterm birth can prevent growth and development from happening inside a baby's body during the final weeks of pregnancy.

Each week of pregnancy matters even those last few weeks. Make every week count and give your baby his best start in life.

Gain more information — attend childbirth education classes. Find your childbirth educator at www.expectantmothersguide.co.za



Date and way of birth — what would Baby choose?

If your pregnancy is healthy, it is best to stay pregnant for at least 39 weeks.

Staying pregnant to full term, or 40 weeks, is one of the best ways to give babies the time they need to grow.

What is considered a full term vs a prem baby?

- A preterm baby is when a baby is born before 37 weeks of pregnancy
- An early term baby is when a baby is born between 37 weeks and 38 weeks of pregnancy
- A full term baby is when a baby is born from 39 weeks of pregnancy through to 40 weeks
- A late term baby is a baby born at 41 weeks
- A postterm baby is a baby born at 42 weeks and beyond

A baby's brain at 35 weeks of pregnancy weighs only 2/3 of what it will weigh at 40 weeks



35 weeks



39 / 40 weeks

Guidelines from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Date and way of birth — what would Baby choose?



Childbirth Education Classes

Birth is a day you will never forget. A day that will change everything and everyone around you forever. It transforms you to a mother, your partner to a father, your parents to grandparents, your siblings to aunts and uncles. Attend childbirth education classes to ensure you have the best possible birthing experience.

QUESTIONS ON ALL ASPECTS OF
PREGNANCY, LABOUR,
BIRTH AND PARENTING

EVIDENCE BASED
INFORMATION

MICROBIOMES

CAESAREAN

SKIN-TO-SKIN AT BIRTH
FOR ALL MOMS AND BABIES

GAINING INSIGHT

BREASTFEEDING

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

OPTIONS

DAD'S ROLE

GAIN KNOWLEDGE

INFORMED
CHOICES

SELF-HELP
TECHNIQUES

VAGINAL
BIRTH

Choosing your Childbirth Educator

Make informed decisions when choosing your childbirth educator

Ensure that you choose the correct classes for you. Since expectant parents have different needs, choosing a childbirth education program that suits your needs is what is important.



The philosophy of the childbirth educator should be freedom of choice based on the knowledge of alternatives.

Some important questions to ask the educator are:

- What are her qualifications? Has she a medical background? Is she a midwife and delivered babies so she understands birth? Has she specialised in childbirth education? Is she a SACPE or ICCE – the designations for a specialist in childbirth education.
- Does she attend regular Childbirth Educator Professional Forum educational updates?
- Is she a mother herself?
- What are her ideals of labour – do they match your ideals and expectations (desires) for your labour?
- Do partners attend all the classes or only a select few?
- Are there practical sessions on breathing, positions for labour, massage, relaxation and visualisation?
- Which birthing methods are included in her course?
- Is she an independent practitioner and so has the freedom to teach in an unbiased manner or is she employed by a hospital or a gynae to teach what they have decided you should know and not all the options available?
- Which birthing method does she put her emphasis on during her teaching? – It is very important that her emphasis should be the birth you are striving for, but she should cover all birthing options
- Length of course – be wary about crash courses. Rather attend a comprehensive course of 6+ sessions

Why Baby would choose a natural birth

A booked Caesar (non-emergency) implies absence of labour and should not be performed before a pregnancy length of 39 weeks. Infants not exposed to labour have a greater risk of respiratory problems which may be life-threatening as well as complications of prematurity such as hypothermia (low body temperature) and hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar levels) which may also be life-threatening. The absence of labour puts the foetus in a precarious position because no physiological adaptation took place to effect a successful transition from intra- to extrauterine life.

The foetus initiates labour which marks the point of optimum functionality – including the brain. Respect for this “decision” places the newborn infant in the least precarious position for perinatal complications. The second best scenario for the foetus is not to be delivered before 39 weeks.



Ensure you attend Childbirth Education classes. Find your childbirth educator today and learn more about classes so you can truly make informed decisions about your pregnancy, birth and parenting experiences



www.expectantmothersguide.co.za

