Pregnancy Health Care: 4 weeks - 9 months
During the first Trimester: Months 1-3
Conception:
How to test at home if you are pregnant:

*How do home pregnancy tests work?*

Home pregnancy tests measure the presence of a telltale hormone called human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) in your urine. This hormone, produced by cells from the placenta, first enters your bloodstream when the fertilized egg implants in your uterus, about six days after fertilization. The amount of HCG in your body then increases rapidly over the next few weeks, doubling every two days or so.
MONTH 1

Your Baby

* Tiny limb buds, which will grow into arms and legs, appear.
* The heart and lungs begin to form. By the 22nd day, the heart starts to beat.
* The neural tube, which becomes the brain and spinal cord, begins to form.
* At the end of the first month, your baby is about 1/4 inch long.
Prenatal Care Guide

* Visit your health care provider for your first prenatal checkup as soon as you think you are pregnant.
* Take a multivitamin with at least 400 micrograms of the B vitamin Folic acid every day to help reduce the risk of birth defects of the brain and spinal cord.
* Ask your health care provider before taking any prescription drugs or over the counter herbal supplements.
* Stop smoking, drinking alcohol, and taking street drugs.
MONTH 3

Your Baby

* Fingers and toes have soft nails.
* The mouth has 20 buds that will become baby teeth.
* Fine hairs begin to form on the baby’s skin.
* You can hear your baby’s heartbeat for the first time (10 to 12 weeks) using a special instrument called a Doptone.
* By end of this month, the baby is about 2 1/2 to 3 inches long and weighs about 1 ounce.
MONTH 3 (cont.)

Your Body
* You may still feel tired and have morning sickness.
* You may have headaches and get lightheaded or dizzy. If these symptoms persist or are severe, tell your health care provider.
* Your clothes may begin to feel tight around your waist and breasts. Try pullover tops and skirts or pants with elastic waists.

Prenatal Care Guide
* Visit your health care provider for one prenatal checkup.
* You have a slightly increased need for almost all vitamins and minerals to nourish your baby. A healthy diet helps to meet these needs.
* You may have gained 2 to 4 pounds by now. A woman who starts pregnancy at a normal weight should gain 25 to 35 pounds during pregnancy. Ask your health care provider how much weight you should gain.
* Exercise can be beneficial. Walking is a good choice. Check with your health care provider before starting an exercise program.
* If your health care provider recommends prenatal testing using Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS), you can have the test now.
What is chorionic villus sampling?(Diagnostic)

*Chorionic villus sampling (CVS) is a prenatal test that detects chromosomal abnormalities such as down syndrome, as well as a host of other genetic disorders. The doctor takes cells from tiny fingerlike projections on the placenta called the chorionic villi and sends them to a lab for genetic analysis.

*The main advantage of CVS over amniocentesis is that you can have it done earlier — generally between 11 and 12 weeks of pregnancy, although some testing centers will do it as late as 13 weeks. (For an amnio, you'll have to wait until you're at least 16 weeks pregnant.)

*Women who choose to have CVS or amniocentesis are primarily those at increased risk for genetic and chromosomal problems, in part because these tests are invasive and carry a small risk of miscarriage.
First trimester pregnancy

Fertilization → 12th week of pregnancy
During the second Trimester:
Months: 4-6
MONTH 4

Your Baby
- The baby moves, kicks and swallows.
- The skin is pink and transparent.
- The umbilical cord continues to carry nourishment from mother to baby—but it also can pass along hazards like alcohol, nicotine and other drugs.
- By the end of the fourth month, your baby is 6 to 7 inches long and weighs about 4 to 5 ounces.
Your Body
* Your appetite increases as morning sickness goes away. You should begin to feel more energetic.
* Toward the end of the fourth month (16 to 20 weeks), you might feel your baby move for the first time; tell your health care provider.
* Your belly begins to show—you probably will need maternity clothes and bigger bras now.

Prenatal Care Guide
* Visit your health care provider for one prenatal care checkup.
* Pregnant women need extra iron—more than even a good diet can supply. Your doctor may recommend iron supplements.
* You'll probably gain about a pound a week, or 12 to 14 pounds, during the second trimester (months 4 to 6).
* If your health care provider recommends prenatal testing using amniocentesis or a blood test called a triple screen for Down syndrome and neural tube defects, you can have them at 15 to 18 weeks.
What is amniocentesis? (diagnostic)
*Amniocentesis is a prenatal test that allows your health care practitioner to gather information about your baby's health and development from a sample of your amniotic fluid. This is the fluid that surrounds your baby in the uterus.

*The most common reason to have an "amnio" is to determine whether a baby has a genetic disorder or a chromosomal abnormality, such as Down syndrome. Only amniocentesis or (CVS) can diagnose these problems in the womb.

*Amniocentesis is usually done when a woman is between 16 and 20 weeks pregnant. Women who choose to have this test are primarily those at increased risk for genetic and chromosomal problems, in part because the test is invasive and carries a small risk of miscarriage.
MONTH 6

Your Baby
* The skin is red and wrinkled and covered with fine, soft hair.
* Eyelids begin to part and the eyes open.
* The baby continues to grow rapidly. At end of the sixth month, the baby is about 12 inches long and weighs 1 1/2 to 2 pounds.
Your Body
* You may feel the baby kicking strongly now.
* The skin on your growing belly may start to itch.
* Your back may hurt. Wear low-heeled shoes or flats. Don't stand for long periods of time. Exercise can help. You may feel pain down the sides of your belly as your uterus stretches the ligaments that support it.

Prenatal Care Guide
* Visit your health care provider for one prenatal care checkup.
* You may be constipated. Drink more water or fruit juice, eat more foods with fiber (like fruits and vegetables) and get some exercise (with your health care provider's approval).
* To help with heartburn, try eating four or five smaller meals during the day.
* Do not take laxatives or antacids without asking your health care provider.

* An ultra sound has been, or can be preformed to tell the sex of your baby, and allows provider to see bone structure and organ development.
What is an ultrasound?(screening)

*Ultrasound imaging, also called ultrasound scanning or sonography, involves exposing part of the body to high-frequency sound waves to produce pictures of the inside of the body. Ultrasound exams do not use ionizing radiation (as used in x-rays). Because ultrasound images are captured in real-time, they can show the structure and movement of the body's internal organs, as well as blood flowing through blood vessels. Ultrasound imaging is a noninvasive medical test that helps physicians diagnose and treat medical conditions. Conventional ultrasound displays the images in thin, flat sections of the body.
During the third Trimester: Months 7-9
MONTH 7

Your Baby
* The baby can open and close its eyes and suck its thumb.
* The baby exercises by kicking and stretching.
* The baby responds to light and sound.
* The baby is now about 15 to 16 inches long and weighs about 2 1/2 to 3 pounds.
Your Body
* If your ankles and feet swell from standing, lie down with your feet raised. If your hands and face swell suddenly, call your health care provider.
* Stretch marks may appear on the abdomen and breasts as they get bigger.
* You may have contractions. This is normal, but call your health care provider if you have more than five contractions in one hour.
* As your belly gets bigger, you may lose your sense of balance. This makes it easier to fall. Be careful!

Prenatal Care Guide
* After the 28th week, visit your health care provider every two weeks for prenatal care.
* Eat a variety of foods that are good for you. You should gain 1 pound a week this month.
* Get plenty of rest—your body is working hard.
* Start childbirth education classes if you haven’t already done so.
* Most health care providers do a blood test for gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) at 24 to 28 weeks.
MONTH 9

Your Baby

* At 37 to 40 weeks, your baby is full term.
* The baby's lungs are mature and ready to function on their own.
* The baby gains about 1/2 pound a week.
* The baby usually drops into a head-down position and rests lower in your abdomen.
* By the end of the ninth month, the baby is 19 to 21 inches long and weighs 6 to 9 pounds.
* Typically, baby is born during this month.
Your Body
* Your belly button may stick out.
* Your breathing should be easier once the baby drops, but you’ll have to urinate more often because the baby is pressing on your bladder.
* Swelling of ankles and feet may increase.
* Your cervix will open up (dilate) and thin out (efface) as it prepares for birth.
* You may be uncomfortable because of the pressure and weight of the baby. Rest often.

Prenatal Care Guide
* After the 36th week, visit your health care provider once a week for prenatal care checkups.
* You may not gain any weight at all this month; you may even lose 1 or 2 pounds.
* Decide if you are going to breast feed or formula feed your baby.
* Time your contractions. You are in labor if your contractions:
  * Are regular or evenly spaced apart (every seven minutes, for example)
  * Happen more than five times an hour
  * Last for 30 to 70 seconds
  * Get worse as you move around
* Call your health care provider if you think you are in labor.
Service Care Providers:
*Family Physician
*Certified Nurse – Midwife
*Obstetrician
The Family Physician

* Is educated and trained in family practice -- a broadly encompassing medical specialty.

* Family physicians possess unique attitudes, skills, and knowledge which qualify them to provide continuing and comprehensive medical care, health maintenance and preventive services to each member of the family regardless of sex, age or type of problem, be it biological, behavioral, or social. These specialists, because of their background and interactions with the family, are best qualified to serve as each patient's advocate in all health-related matters, including the appropriate use of consultants, health services, and community resources.
Nurse-Midwife

* A nurse-midwife is an advanced practice nurse with additional training around delivering babies and providing prenatal and postpartum care to women.
* Nurse-midwives are very involved in labor and delivery, sometimes never leaving the mother during the entire labor process. They are trained to recognize signs and symptoms that deviate from normal conditions and will consult with a physician who may become involved in the delivery if needed.
* Although qualified to administer drugs and to perform medical procedures, those interventions are not routine for nurse-midwives, and they are used only when the mother requests them.
* Most nurse-midwives deliver babies in hospitals and in homes. They also provide both prenatal and postpartum care for both mothers and newborns.
*Is a physician who has successfully completed specialized education and training in the management of pregnancy, labor, and puerperium (the time-period directly following childbirth).
THE END!