

When is my Baby Due?

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Is my “due date” correct?

If your due date was set by the date of your last period, without an early ultrasound to confirm it, that date is more likely to be wrong!

Women are nearly 5 times more likely to be told they are “overdue” on a due date that is set by the last menstrual period (even if a woman was sure of that date) ([Taipale & Hiilesmaa 2001](#)).

“Ultrasound before 20 weeks is the best way to tell how far along you are.”

If your due date was set by an early ultrasound (before 20 weeks) it’s more likely to be correct.

All babies are about the same size in early pregnancy, so ultrasound is the most accurate way to know how far along the pregnancy is (2010 Cochrane review) ([Taipale & Hiilesmaa 2001](#)).

Ask your doctor or midwife how your due date was calculated!

Should a due date be changed at the end of pregnancy if the baby seems big?

By the end of pregnancy babies can vary greatly in size just like children do; one newborn might weigh 6 lbs and another 10 lbs even though they are the same age!

Ultrasounds in the last part of pregnancy are not an accurate way to set the due date and should not change your original due date except in very rare circumstances ([ACOG 2014](#)).

How long is a “normal” pregnancy? Is it really 40 weeks?

The best evidence shows that **the average length of a normal pregnancy is closer to 40 weeks and 5 days** from the start of the last menstrual period (or 40 weeks and 3 days for women who have given birth before) ([Smith 2001](#), [Jukic et al. 2013](#))!

There is no such thing as an exact due date for every woman. Instead, there is a normal range of time in which most women give birth: Half of women go into labor naturally by 40 weeks and 5 days, and the other half go longer. At least 90% of women will go into labor on their own by 42 weeks ([Jukic et al. 2013](#)).

Instead of sharing your “due date” with friends and family, consider sharing a “guess date” or “due month”!

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