

<h2>Glossary of Terms</h2>	
Amniotic fluid	The fluid that surrounds the baby in the uterus
Amniotic sac	The bag that contains the baby and amniotic fluid, found in the uterus
Anemia	A condition of having a lower-than-normal number of red blood cells or quantity of hemoglobin; In pregnancy, most often due to iron deficiency
Antepartum	The time period before childbirth
APGAR score	A method of evaluating a baby's health immediately after birth
AROM	Acronym for Artificial Rupture of the Membranes
Baby blues	Mood swings following the first two weeks of childbirth
Bilirubin	The waste product resulting from the breakdown of hemoglobin molecules from red blood cells
Birth canal	The passageway made up of the cervix and vagina that the baby travels through during the last phase of labor before birth
BMI	Body mass index; a measure of body fat based on height and weight
Braxton-Hicks contractions	Painless or mild uterine contractions felt by the mother from as early as the fifth month of pregnancy. They tone the muscles of the uterus and may also help prepare the cervix for birth.
Breech	Fetal position in which the feet or buttocks of the baby are closest to the mother's cervix
Certified nurse midwife	A registered nurse with an advanced degree and national certification in midwifery.
Cervix	The narrow passage forming the lower end of the uterus
Cesarean section	A surgical procedure in which baby is delivered through a cut in the abdomen and uterus. Also called a C-Section
Chiropractic care	Treating disorders of the body, especially of the bones, muscles, and joints. Typically involves manipulating the spinal column and other body structures
Circumcision	Surgical removal of the foreskin from the penis
Colostrum	The milk secreted shortly before and for a few days after birth. Baby's first food, rich in protein, fat, and antibodies.
Constipation	Hard to pass, or infrequent bowel movements
Contraction	The rhythmic tightening and relaxation of the uterine muscles that result in effacement and dilation of the cervix and birth of the baby.
Crowning	Point in labor when the baby's head remains visible at the opening of the vagina
Diastasis	A vertical separation of the two halves of the abdominal muscles; may occur in the second half of pregnancy
Dilation	Opening of the cervix; measured in centimeters 0-10
Doppler	A hand held device which uses ultrasound waves to detect the baby's heart beat
Doula	A professional trained in childbirth who provides emotional, physical, and educational support to a mother who is expecting, is experiencing labor, or has recently given birth

Edema	Swelling of soft tissues as a result of excess water retention
Effacement	Thinning of the cervix
Engaged	When the lowermost part of the baby (usually the head) descends and is engaged in the mother's pelvis
Engorgement	The development of painful overfilling of the breasts when the amount of milk produced is more than the amount of milk removed from the breast
Episiotomy	An incision made to the perineum to widen the vaginal opening for birth
Epidural	A type of anesthesia used to lessen or relieve pain during labor. A catheter is placed in the epidural space in front of the spine and medication is infused to bathe the nerve roots
External version	The manual attempt to rotate a fetus into a head-down position
False labor	Regular or irregular contractions of the uterus that do not change the cervix
Fetal monitor	Device used to record the heartbeat of the fetus and detect contractions
Fontanelles	The soft spots on a baby's head that allow its skull to compress during birth so it can pass through the birth canal
Fundal height	A measurement in centimeters from the top of the uterus to the pubic bone; taken from >20 weeks to the end of pregnancy; used to assess fetal growth
Gestational diabetes	A form of diabetes that develops while pregnant. It often resolves after birth.
Group beta strep	A type of bacteria that can be found in the pregnant woman's vagina and/or rectum
Hemoglobin	A protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body
Hemorrhage	Excessive bleeding
Hemorrhoid	A swollen vein or group of veins in the region of the anus
Homeopathy	A method of treating a condition by the administration of minute doses of a remedy that would in larger amounts produce symptoms in healthy persons similar to those of the condition being treated
Herb	A flowering plant whose stem above ground does not become woody and persistent; used for its medicinal properties, flavor, or scent
Induced labor	When labor is started or accelerated through intervention
Jaundice	Yellow discoloration of the skin caused by the immature liver's inability to process broken down excess red blood cells
Kegal exercise	An exercise that consists of repeatedly contracting and relaxing the muscles that are part of the pelvic floor
Lochia	The discharge of blood, mucus, and other fluids from the vagina that occurs after birth
Meconium	The first stool of a newborn, composed chiefly of bile, mucus, and epithelial cells; dark and sticky in appearance
Molding	The shaping of the newborn's head as a result of pressure from labor and the passage through the birth canal
Mucus plug	A jellylike substance that seals off the cervix and is expelled as the cervix thins and dilates before birth

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Nitrous oxide	A colorless, sweet-smelling gas used to decrease anxiety and the perception of pain. Often called laughing gas.
Non-stress test	A measurement of the fetal heart rate in response to movement over time
Obstetrician	A doctor that specializes in pregnancy, labor, and birth.
Oxytocin	The hormone that stimulates uterine contractions and the let-down reflex in the breast; produced by the pituitary gland
Perineum	The muscle and tissue between the vagina and rectum
PCP	Prenatal Care Plus; a form of group prenatal care that includes assessment, education, and sharing
Pediatrician	A doctor that specializes in the care of infants and children
Placenta	The organ that connects to the wall of the uterus through which the fetus receives nourishment and oxygen via the umbilical cord
Placenta previa	A condition in which the placenta lies very low in the uterus so that the cervix is partially or completely covered
Postpartum	The period of time after a baby's birth
Postpartum depression	A form of severe depression after birth that interferes with daily functioning and requires treatment. Symptoms include feelings of sadness, despair, anxiety, and severe irritability.
Postterm	A baby born at 42 weeks or after
Presentation	The position of the baby in relation to the cervix
Preeclampsia	A pregnancy complication that develops in the second half of pregnancy characterized by high blood pressure and sometimes excessive protein levels in the urine and swelling. Often referred to as toxemia.
Preterm	A baby born before 37 weeks gestation
Probiotic	A food or supplement that stimulates the growth of beneficial bacteria within the body
Round ligament pain	Pain caused by stretching of the ligaments that support the uterus
Sciatica	Pain felt in the low back, hip, and outer side of the leg
Show	Blood tinged mucus from the vagina; often occurs as the cervix thins and opens in labor
Station	The measurement of how far the baby has traveled into the birth canal
Symphysis pubis	The area in the front of the pelvis where the pubic bones meet ; a cartilaginous joint
TENS	Trans-electrical nerve stimulation is the use of electric current produced by a device to stimulate the nerves for therapeutic purposes, such as lessening the perception of pain in labor
Toxemia	See preeclampsia
Ultrasound	A device that uses high frequency sound waves to produce a picture or image of the baby in the uterus; also called sonogram
Vernix	A white sticky substance that covers and protects the baby's skin while in the uterus