

INFORMATION ON

*Fetal
Development,
Abortion
And Adoption*



WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES



This publication was produced in compliance with West Virginia Code 16-21-1, et. Seq., known as the Women's Right to Know Act, which requires the medical practitioner performing abortions to inform the female of physical and emotional risks of abortion procedures and risks of carrying a pregnancy to term.

This booklet and service directory is available free of charge upon request by calling the Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health at 1-800-642-8522 or online at www.wvdhhr.org.

Introduction

The information contained in this booklet describes and illustrates, at two week intervals, how a developing embryo or fetus grows during stages of a woman's pregnancy. Also provided is information about abortion methods and medical risks, as well as the medical risks of childbirth.

Government programs may pay for or help pay medical bills for pregnancy care and are available as a service directory in paper copy and on the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) internet website. This includes geographically indexed materials designed to inform women of public and private agencies and services available to assist her through pregnancy, upon childbirth and while the child is dependent, including adoption agencies. Also included is a comprehensive list of the agencies available including a description of the services they offer and their telephone numbers.


All women should be advised:

- The decision to terminate a pregnancy or to carry a pregnancy to term is hers. It is unlawful for any individual to coerce someone to undergo an abortion.
- The father of a child is legally responsible to assist in the support of that child, even in instances where he has offered to pay for an abortion.
- The law permits adoptive parents to pay costs of prenatal care, childbirth and neonatal care.

Fetal Development

A female's egg is fertilized by a male's sperm in the fallopian tube. After fertilization, the egg divides and multiplies to form the embryo. During the next few days, the embryo moves through the fallopian tube to the lining of the uterus. There it implants and starts to grow.

During pregnancy, the lining of the female's uterus thickens and its blood vessels enlarge to nourish the fetus. As pregnancy progresses, the uterus expands to make room for the growing embryo/fetus. The following pictures and drawings illustrate fetal development from 8 to 40 weeks.



8 WEEKS

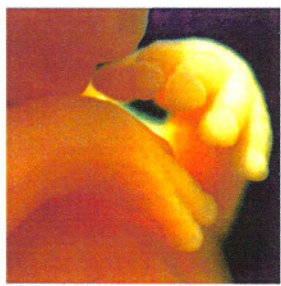
1 1/2 inches — 1/2 ounce

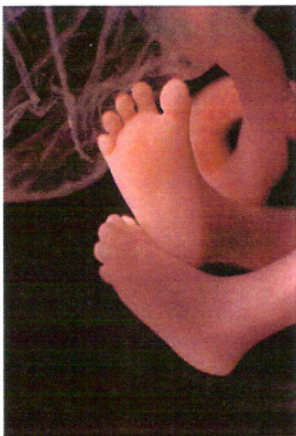
The beginnings of all key body parts are present, although they are not completely positioned in their final locations.

Structures that will form eyes, ears, arms and legs are identifiable.

Muscles and skeleton are developing and the nervous system becomes more responsive.

The heart has four chambers and began pumping blood four weeks ago.





10 WEEKS

2 1/2 inches — 1.5 ounces

Fingers and toes are distinct and have nails.

The fetus begins small, random movements, too slight to be felt.

The fetal heartbeat can be detected with a heart monitor.

All major external body features have appeared.

Muscles continue to develop.



12 WEEKS

3.5 inches — 2 ounces

The fetus begins to swallow, the kidneys make urine, and blood begins to form in the bone marrow.

Joints and muscles allow full body movement.

There are eyelids and the nose is developing a bridge.

External genitals have been developing so that the sex can be identified.

