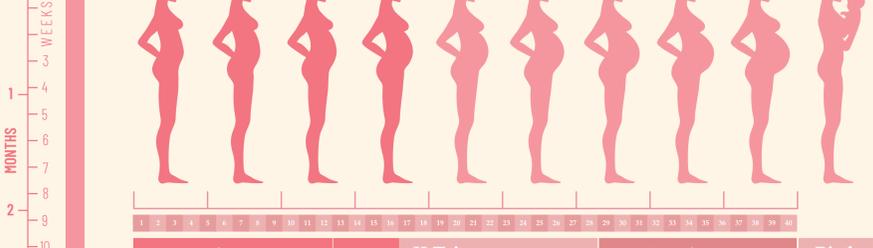


# Your pregnancy week by week: weeks 15 & 16



Your baby is rapidly growing and is about to experience another growth spurt. You've probably gained some weight in the last few weeks as well.

Here is a list of tips to help you get through **the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> weeks of pregnancy.**



## Week 15

### The 15<sup>th</sup> Week of Pregnancy

#### What is happening with your baby at 15 weeks pregnant<sup>1,2</sup>?



- This week, your baby has been busy growing **a soft layer of hair all over the body.** The eyebrows and eyelashes are also **starting to sprout.**
- Your baby's eyes are now **sensitive to light.** Although they're firmly shut, they could pick up **a bright light in the world outside your womb.**
- Around now, your baby **will start hearing too.** Talk to your baby and they will probably hear you. They will also hear **your heartbeat and any noises made by your digestive system.**

#### How big is your baby when you are 15 weeks pregnant?



Your baby is about **the size of an apple.** The weight is around **70g,** which is the same as a **small bag of salad.**<sup>1</sup>

#### Your Body

- It is normal to have more **vaginal discharge** in pregnancy. It's usually **thin, clear or milky white** and should not **smell unpleasant.**<sup>3</sup>
  - o See your doctor if:<sup>1</sup>
    - it changes color – it should be clear, white or creamy.
    - it starts smelling badly – it should smell slightly musky, not strongly of fish or anything else.
    - it changes texture – for example, it starts going frothy or looks like cottage cheese.
    - you get pain when peeing.
    - you feel itchy or sore.
  - o Any of these signs could mean that you've got a **vaginal infection,** so get checked out as this could be easily treated.
- You may have backache in pregnancy as your womb gets heavier and pregnancy hormones affect the ligaments in your body, which can put a strain on your lower back.<sup>3</sup>



## Week 16

### The 16<sup>th</sup> Week of Pregnancy

#### What is happening with your baby when you are 16 weeks pregnant<sup>4,5</sup>?



- Your baby is starting to pull faces now, but any smiling or frowning **will be completely random,** as there's no muscle control yet.<sup>4</sup>
- The nervous system continues to develop, and this enables your baby to start moving their arms and legs. You might be able **to feel your baby kicking from next week onwards,** which is something exciting to look forward to.<sup>4</sup>
- Your baby's hands can form fists and **they may start punching around inside you too.**<sup>4</sup>

#### How big is your baby when you are 16 weeks pregnant?



Your baby is about **the size of an avocado.** The weight is around **100g,** which is the same as **a medium bag of salad.**<sup>4</sup>

#### Your Body<sup>6</sup>



- Your uterus is continuing to grow and weighs approximately **¼ kg.**
- Your placenta is also growing, and your body is producing an increased amount of amniotic fluid that helps protect your baby during your pregnancy.
- When you are pregnant, your blood volume increases by 30- 50%, resulting in more blood circulation through your body. This increase in blood circulation causes your face to be brighter.
- Your body is also producing hormones that cause your oil glands to work in over-drive, leaving your face shiny.
- Both of these things can result in a "pregnancy glow." If your skin becomes too oily, you can use an oil-free cleanser to clean your face. Other than that, just smile and enjoy your glow!



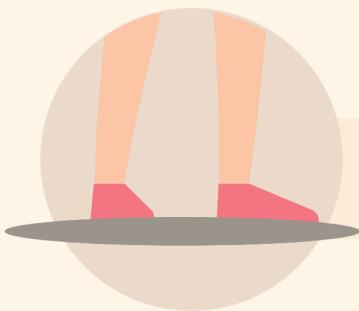
# Tips for making your pregnancy better

## • Avoiding and easing back pain in pregnancy Try these tips:<sup>7</sup>

o bend your knees and **keep your back straight** when you lift or pick something up from the floor



o avoid lifting **heavy objects**



o move your feet when you turn to **avoid twisting your spine**

o **wear flat shoes** to evenly distribute your weight

o **try to balance the weight** between 2 bags when carrying shopping



o keep your back straight and well supported when sitting – **look for maternity support pillows**



o **get enough rest**, particularly later in pregnancy

o **have a massage** or a warm bath

o **use a mattress that supports you** properly – you can put a piece of hardboard under a soft mattress to make it firmer, if necessary

o go to a group or individual **back care class**



## References:

1. NHS. Start 4 life. Week-by-week guide to pregnancy. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/pregnancy/week-by-week/2nd-trimester/week-15/#anchor-tabs>. Last accessed at: 24/10/2021
2. Nemours KidsHealth. Parents: Week 15. Available at: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/week15.html>. Last accessed at: 24.10.2021
3. NIH. You and your baby at 15 weeks pregnant. Page last reviewed: 17 July 2018. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/week-by-week/13-to-27/15-weeks/>. Last accessed at: 24.10.2021.
4. NHS. Start 4 life. Week-by-week guide to pregnancy. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/pregnancy/week-by-week/2nd-trimester/week-16/#anchor-tabs>. Last accessed at: 24/10/2021
5. Nemours KidsHealth. Parents: Week 16. Available at: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/week16.html>. Last accessed at: 24/10/2021
6. American Pregnancy Association. Pregnancy Week 16: Your developing baby. Available at: <https://americanpregnancy.org/healthy-pregnancy/week-by-week/16-weeks-pregnant/>. Last accessed at: 24/10/2021
7. NHS. Back pain in pregnancy. Page last reviewed: 15 March 2021. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/related-conditions/common-symptoms/back-pain/>. Last accessed at: 24.10.2021.