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## Pregnant with Twins

Today, more women are having multiple births than ever before, with twins accounting for over 90 percent of multiple births. Twins are a double blessing, say their mothers. But your pregnancy will be a little different...

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Monday, August 7th, 2017

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Preparing for a multiple birth

### **How will you know you're carrying more than one baby?**

The only way to be sure is to identify two separate heartbeats. They can be detected by abdominal ultrasound in your third month or by vaginal ultrasound as early as six weeks. Other tests can also identify twins: for example, Doppler heartbeat count, elevated hCG levels, an abnormal AFT test and measuring larger for gestational age. All of these tests are performed by a doctor.

### **What can you expect?**

Your due date could be earlier. Twins often are born prematurely because their combined weight may speed the onset of labour. Most likely you will deliver your twins at 38 weeks, contrary to mothers with single babies who deliver at 40 weeks.

### **Having twins? Know the risks**

It's always good to know what you're in for with any pregnancy so you can be well prepared for what lies ahead. Some of the risks involved with a multiple pregnancy may include:

- A greater chance of early labour, your babies may be born prematurely. Premature babies can be more vulnerable. However, advancements in medical sciences have increased their chances of better health and survival.
- You may be likely to experience more physical changes and feel more tired and uncomfortable. Try to stay calm and build up your strength.
- There may also be some medical conditions that you may be at risk of also while pregnant with twins. You should consult your doctor to discuss any of these risks as they will vary for each mum and it's important you know what's relevant to your pregnancy.

Tap into a twins network

Being mother to twins is a big job. Talking with mothers of other twins can help – they'll understand the challenges of carrying more than one baby and can give you valuable advice when your babies are born. Try joining an online community.

### **Tips**

First of all, don't worry yourself over what 'may' happen – consult your doctor if you have any concerns. Be a pro-active mum-to-be:

- Get your compulsory prenatal and antenatal tests done on time, as it's only these tests that can tell you effectively if you or your babies are at risk.

- Meet your doctor regularly so your condition is closely monitored. Don't miss your appointments.
- Eat a healthy balanced diet rich in proteins, folic acid, calcium, iron, iodine and essential fatty acids.
- Exercise moderately. The larger bulge in your tummy must not stop you from going for your regular walks and exercise routines, though you should consult your doctor before varying your physical activity.
- Stay as calm and cheerful as possible. Retain energy, because your little ones are going to demand a lot from you

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