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Maternal physiological changes in pregnancy are the adaptations during pregnancy that a woman's body undergoes to accommodate the growing embryo or fetus. These physiologic changes are entirely normal, and include behavioral (brain), cardiovascular (heart and blood vessel), hematologic (blood), metabolic, renal (kidney), posture, and respiratory (breathing) changes. Increases in blood sugar, breathing, and cardiac output are all expected changes that allow a pregnant woman's body to facilitate the proper growth and development of the embryo or fetus during the pregnancy. The pregnant woman and the placenta also produce many other hormones that have a broad range of effects during the pregnancy.

HORMONAL

Pregnant women experience numerous adjustments in their endocrine system that help support the developing fetus. The fetal-placental unit secretes steroid hormones and proteins that alter the function of various maternal endocrine glands. Sometimes, the changes in certain hormone levels and their effects on their target organs can lead to gestational diabetes and gestational hypertension.

Breast size

A woman's breasts grow during pregnancy, usually 1 to 2 cup sizes and potentially several cup sizes. A woman who wore a C cup bra prior to her pregnancy may need to buy an F cup or larger bra while nursing. A woman's torso also grows and her bra band size may increase one or two sizes. An average of 80% of women wear the wrong bra size and mothers who are preparing to nurse can benefit from a professional bra fitting from a lactation consultant. Once the baby is born up to about 50–73 hours after birth, the mother will experience her breasts filling with milk (sometimes referred to as “the milk coming in”). Once lactation begins, the woman's breasts swell significantly and can feel achy, lumpy and heavy (which is referred to as engorgement). Her breasts may increase in size again by an additional 1 or 2 cup sizes, but individual breast size may vary depending on how much the infant nurses from each breast. A regular pattern of nursing is generally established after 8–12 weeks, and a woman's breasts will usually reduce in size, but may remain about 1 cup size larger than prior to her pregnancy. Changes in breast size during pregnancy may be related to the sex of the infant, as mothers of female infants have greater changes in breast size than mothers of male infants.