

Second trimester

Weeks 13 to 28

Congratulations, you are nearing the halfway mark of your pregnancy!

You are now in the **second trimester** of your pregnancy. For many women, this stage feels calmer and passes quickly, making it an ideal time to enjoy the experience of growing your baby.

My body is changing again!

As your baby grows, your pregnancy will start to become more noticeable, especially if this is not your first child. First-time moms may show a little later due to stronger abdominal muscles.

For most women, nausea and morning sickness begin to ease around 15 weeks. You may still be making frequent trips to the bathroom as your growing uterus puts pressure on your bladder.

Between 16 and 20 weeks, many moms feel their baby move for the first time. These early movements may feel like flutters and will grow stronger over time and feel like a kick or fist punch.

You may notice a dark line on your belly, known as the *Linea nigra*. Some women develop pink or shiny stretch marks as their belly grows, while others experience itching as the skin stretches. Using a good moisturiser that contains olive oil may help soothe itching and discomfort.

Food cravings or aversions, constipation, heartburn, mild swelling of the feet and ankles due to water retention, headaches, light-headedness and sensitive gums are all common during this period. Remember to rest when needed and listen to your body.

What's happening with your baby?

Your baby is very active during this trimester and may roll, stretch and suck their fingers. Your baby can hear you and respond to light, touch and sound, which makes this a good time to sing and encourage dad to talk to your baby. Their hands and fingernails are fully formed, and they can swallow, absorb and discharge fluids. Remember that everything you eat, your baby eats.

When to contact your doctor or midwife

Contact your healthcare provider if you experience sudden or excessive swelling of your face, hands or feet, persistent headaches, or blurred vision. Also seek medical advice if you have severe pain in the lower belly, fever or vaginal bleeding.

Your second trimester to-do list

Continue with multivitamins and minerals as prescribed by your doctor, maintain a balanced diet, and explore pregnancy-safe exercise, with guidance from your healthcare provider. It's also a good time to start thinking about your birth preferences and to discuss upcoming ultrasounds and any additional tests with your doctor or midwife.



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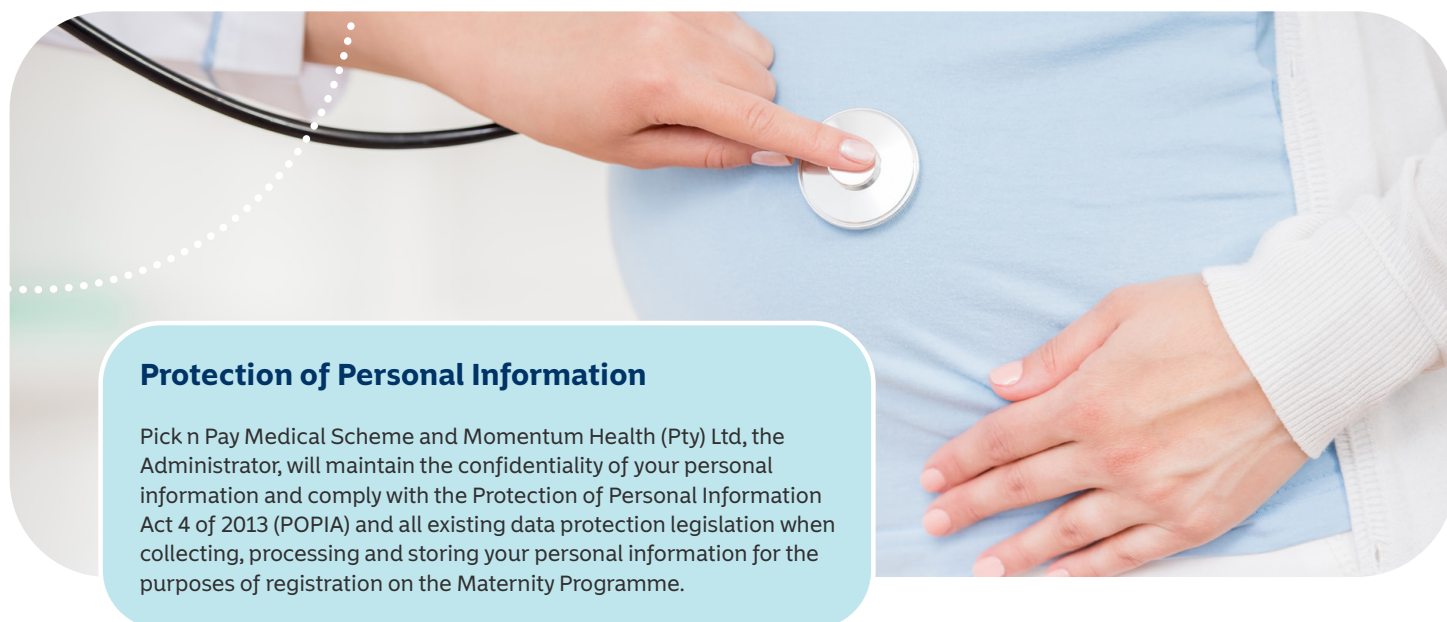
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As you move through your second trimester, enjoy the changes, milestones, and moments that make this time so special. Pick n Pay Medical Scheme wishes you continued good health, happiness, and a smooth journey as you move closer to meeting your little one.



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