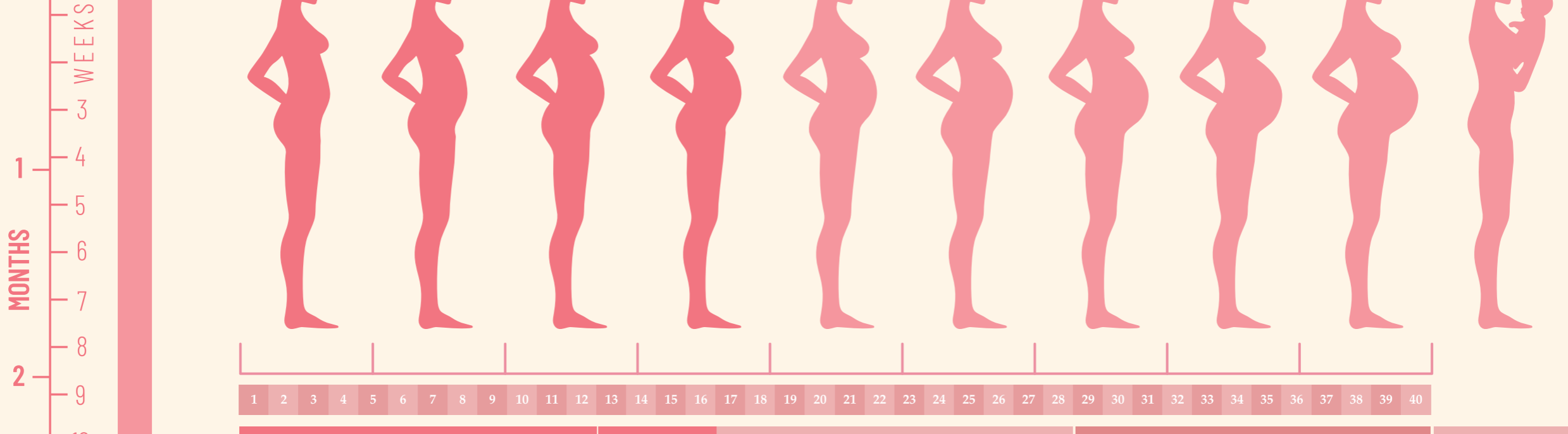


Your pregnancy week by week: weeks 15 & 16



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 15th and 16th weeks of pregnancy.**



Week 15

The 15th Week of Pregnancy

What is happening with your baby at 15 weeks pregnant^{1,2}?



- 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.**¹

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.**³
 - o See your doctor if:¹
 - 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.³



Week 16

The 16th Week of Pregnancy

What is happening with your baby when you are 16 weeks pregnant^{4,5}?



- Your baby is starting to pull faces now, but any smiling or frowning **will be completely random,** as there's no muscle control yet.⁴
- 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.⁴
- Your baby's hands can form fists and **they may start punching around inside you too.**⁴

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.**⁴

Your Body⁶



- 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:⁷

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**



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