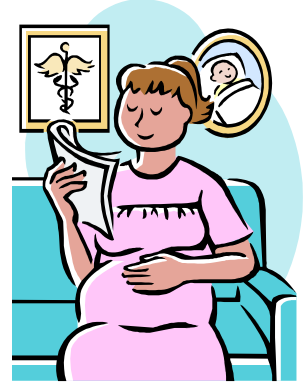


# Pregnancy After 35

If you are older than 35 and pregnant, you're in good company as more women having children later in life.

A pregnancy after age 35 may require some special precautions, because it can be riskier than childbearing during the optimum years of ages 20 through 34. But advances in medical care have made it safer than ever before, and most women in their late 30s and 40s have healthy pregnancies and babies. Still, there are factors to keep in mind if you're considering a pregnancy after age 35.



## Decreased Fertility

It may take you longer to become pregnant because there's a general decrease in fertility that begins in the early 30s. That's when women typically begin to ovulate less frequently, or is more susceptible to endometriosis, a condition in which tissue similar to that lining the uterus attaches to ovaries or fallopian tubes, which can make conception more difficult. Other problems may also accumulate with age, which may decrease the chance of conceiving. So if you're older than 35 and have been unable to conceive after six months, see your doctor or fertility specialist because many of these "infertility" cases can be treated.

## Greater Risk of Miscarriages

Women older than 35 face higher rates of miscarriages than women younger than 35, while women older than age 40 may face substantially higher rates of miscarriages as 40 percent. Most of these miscarriages are caused by chromosomal abnormalities, which are most common in women older than 35.

## More Problems During Pregnancy

Women older than 35 are twice as likely as those in their 20s to develop high blood pressure or diabetes during pregnancy; conditions that could adversely affect the mother and the fetus during pregnancy. They also face a higher risk of placental and bleeding problems during pregnancy.

## Harder Deliveries

First-time mothers older than age 30 typically have harder labor than younger women, including a prolonged second stage of labor and more fetal distress. Women age 35 through 39 may have a 37.4 percent chance of delivering by Caesarean section and those age 40 through 49 have a 31.6 percent chance, higher rates than those of younger women. They're also more likely to give birth to twins or triplets.