

Our Life Journey – From Conception to Birth

“Human development is a continuous process beginning with fertilization and continuing throughout pregnancy, birth, childhood, adolescence and adulthood into old age.”

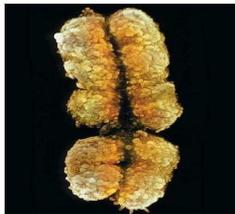
—The Endowment for Human Development



At the very moment when the female reproductive cell (the egg) and the male reproductive cell (the sperm)

unite, a new unique life is created. This life is called a zygote. Remember that you were once just like this.

All of the genetic information that determines our gender, the color of our hair, or our eyes, how tall we will be, etc., is in place at the moment of conception. This genetic information comes from the DNA that is found in our chromosomes.



Two weeks after conception, the unborn baby is attached to the inside wall of the uterus, the baby’s new ‘home’ for the next 36 weeks. This next life stage is called the embryo.

Only three weeks and one day following conception, the baby’s heart begins to beat - with the child’s own blood.



**FIVE WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The embryo begins to develop eyes, legs and hands.



**SEVEN WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The child is about 1.5 cm long. The eyes, fingers and toes are developing. The baby is kicking and swimming. The intestines begin to work, and the kidneys begin to produce urine.



**EIGHT WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The new life is now called a fetus. Every organ is in place, fingerprints form, and the baby can hear.



**TWELVE WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The baby is able to experience pain. He or she can suck his or her thumb.



**SIXTEEN WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

By this time he or she responds to pain, and pulls away when pressure is sensed, just like an adult.



**TWENTY WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The teeth are developed in the gums. The baby breathes rhythmically and rapidly gains weight.



**TWENTY-FOUR WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The baby is about 30 cm. long and weighs a little over 1/2 kg. All organs are functioning.



**THIRTY WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

Size and weight are doubling. The baby responds to the voice of his mother differently than he or she responds to the voice of others.



**THIRTY-EIGHT WEEKS
AFTER CONCEPTION**

The next life stage is birth. The baby can be seen and touched. This journey from the union of the egg and sperm is a miracle.

There is no greater miracle in all of creation than that of the human life. Every life is unique. There is no one exactly like you and there never will be another person just like you.



Even identical twins are different. Each twin may be a little taller, or heavier or have different mannerisms. They even have different fingerprints.



Not only are people physically unique but they are created by God for a unique purpose.



Perhaps to help many throughout the world



Or to help a few in our own community



Or to extend a loving touch to one other person

All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139: vs.16 b

Our life's journey begins at conception. Each of these life stages has its own characteristics. Just because a toddler or a preschool child has only the beginning stages of development in these areas does not mean that he or she is of less value than the adult. Likewise, the baby in the womb has value.



Always remember, when God made you He did so with a purpose and a plan. He saw all of your days before you lived one of them and placed over you the covering of His protective love. He calls you by name. At every life stage you are His beloved child.

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Wonderfully
and
Uniquely Created



For you [God] created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Psalm 139: vs. 13 & 14

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