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Excellence in Women's Healthcare
Your Baby and Your Body During Pregnancy

31-34 Weeks

- **Baby:** Your baby measures about 18 inches long from head to toe and weighs about 3.5 pounds. Rather than hearing vibrations, baby's nerve endings in his/her ears are connected now so that he/she can hear distinct sounds, like familiar voices and music. At the 34 week stage your baby measures about 19.8 inches from head to toe and weighs about 5 pounds. Baby is probably setting into the head-down position, although it might not be final. Organs are now almost fully mature, except for lungs, and the skin is pink instead of red. Fingernails reach the ends of fingers, but toenails are not yet fully grown. Baby might have lots of hair. Movements are less frequent because of the tight fit.
- **Mom to be:** Your uterus now fills a large part of your abdomen, and you've probably gained between 21 and 27 pounds. You're probably feeling increasing excitement and anxiousness about the birth-it won't be long now. You'll probably switch to weekly visits. You may continue to get backaches and legs cramps. You may also notice colostrums leaking from your breasts, a yellowish fluid that precedes milk production. Around 33 weeks your uterus is about 5.2 inches above your navel, and you've gained between 22 and 28 pounds. The pound of week you're gaining now, roughly half is going to your baby.
- **Tips for the week:** You might be carrying differently from others at the same stage of pregnancy. Whether you're carrying higher or lower, bigger or smaller, wider or more compact depends on the size and position of the baby, your body type and how much weight you've gained. For more comfort, drink plenty of fluids, elevate your legs when sitting, lie on your left side and wear support stockings.
- **Your baby:** By the end of these four weeks, your baby will weigh as much as 5 pounds.

- ❖ Your baby continues to mature and develop and develop reserves of the body fat.
- ❖ You may notice that your baby is kicking more.
- ❖ Baby's brain is developing rapidly at this time, and he/she can hear.
- ❖ Most internal systems are well developed, but the lungs may still be immature.

➤ **Your Body:**

- ❖ Your uterus hardens and contracts as practice for labor, known as Braxton Hicks contractions, but you may not feel them yet.
- ❖ Your pelvis has expanded and may ache, especially at the back.
- ❖ Your uterus is pushed hard against your lower ribs and your rib cage may be sore, and your navel is probably pushing out as result of your abdomen being stretched.