

# Being Pregnant with Twins, Triplets and Other Multiples



## What You Need To Know

### Congratulations!

You're pregnant with multiples, which means that you are carrying twins, triplets or more. More than 3 in 100 women (three percent) are pregnant with multiples each year.

Most women with multiples are pregnant with twins. But some women get pregnant with three (triplets), four (quadruplets) or more babies. These are called higher-order multiples.

### What Causes You To Be Pregnant With Multiples?

A multiple pregnancy usually happens when more than one egg is fertilized. But it also can occur when one egg is fertilized and then splits into two or more embryos.

### What Are Identical And Fraternal Twins?

Identical twins happen when one fertilized egg splits into two. Identical twins look almost exactly alike and share the same genes. Fraternal twins happen when two separate eggs are fertilized by two separate sperm. Fraternal twins don't share the exact same genes. They are no more alike than they are to any brothers and sisters from different pregnancies with the same mother and father.

### Here's What You Need To Know About Being Pregnant With Multiples:

- You and your babies are more likely to have health complications than if you're pregnant with one baby (also called a singleton).
- You may need to go to extra prenatal care checkups so that your doctor can monitor you and your babies closely for complications.
- Premature birth (birth before 37 weeks of pregnancy) is the most common complication of being pregnant with multiples. You're six times more likely to have your babies early than if you're pregnant with one baby. It is important to be aware of symptoms of premature labor and seek medical attention from your doctor or hospital.

## We Offer Maternity Care Right In Your Neighborhood!

### High-Risk Case Management

If you are having problems with your pregnancy, our case managers can help and answer any questions you may have.

### Questions?

Call our Patient Assistance Line at **(888) 787-1712**

(TTY call 711), Monday - Friday  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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## What Kind Of Prenatal Care Do You Need If You're Pregnant With Multiples?

You may need special medical care during your pregnancy, labor, and birth. You might need to go to extra prenatal care checkups so your doctor can monitor for any pregnancy complications. Your doctor may send you to a maternal-fetal medicine specialist.

A maternal-fetal medicine specialist is an obstetrician with special education and training to take care of women who have high-risk pregnancies. If you are referred to one, don't panic. It just means that the specialist can check you and your babies to help prevent or treat any conditions that may happen.

## Do You Need To Eat A Special Diet If You're Pregnant With Multiples?

No, but you do need more of certain nutrients, like folic acid, iron, and calcium when you're pregnant with more than one baby. You can get the right amounts of these nutrients by eating healthy foods and taking your prenatal vitamin every day.

## Knowledge is Power

If you have questions about your pregnancy, ask your doctor. You can also visit the following websites:

### March of Dimes:

[www.marchofdimes.org](http://www.marchofdimes.org)

### First 5 California:

[www.first5california.com](http://www.first5california.com)

*Remember: If you have any questions or concerns at any time, make sure you contact your doctor right away.*

