



40 Reasons To Go the Full 40

Nobody likes to be rushed – especially babies!

Your baby needs a full 40 weeks of pregnancy to grow and develop. While being done with pregnancy may seem tempting, especially during those last few weeks, inducing labor is associated with increased risks including prematurity, cesarean surgery, hemorrhage and infection. Labor should only be induced for medical reasons – not for convenience or scheduling concerns. Baby will let you know when she's ready to emerge. Until then, here are 40 reasons to go at least the full 40 weeks of pregnancy:

Finish healthy & well

1. End right by starting right – keeping all of your prenatal appointments helps ensure a healthier ending
2. Savor the journey – soon you will meet your baby
3. Let nature take over – there are fewer complications and risks for both you and baby through natural birth
4. Recover faster from a natural birth than cesarean, which is major abdominal surgery that causes more pain, requires a longer hospital stay and a longer recovery
5. Birth a brainier baby – at 35 weeks, your baby's brain is only two-thirds the size it will be at term
6. Set her thermostat – baby will better regulate her temperature when born at term
7. Boost breastfeeding – term babies more effectively suck and swallow than babies born earlier
8. Delight in those kicks and flips – marvel at the miracle of the life inside
9. Enjoy your convenient excuse for every mood swing and crazy craving
10. Nourish your body – a healthy diet and breastfeeding will help you lose the baby weight
11. Let others carry the groceries, mail and packages just a while longer
12. Indulge in “we” time before you're a threesome or more
13. Sport your bump – as your belly increases, so do your chances of getting a great seat almost anywhere

The nurses of The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses remind you not to rush your baby – give her at least a full 40!

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Manage your risks

14. Eat healthfully – indulge occasional cravings without remorse
15. Give baby's development the benefit of time since you may not know exactly when you became pregnant
16. Let baby pick her birthday – if she decides to emerge after 37 weeks, there's no need to try to stop your spontaneous labor
17. Skip an induction – which could lead to a cesarean section – by waiting for labor to start on its own
18. Reduce your baby's risks of jaundice, low blood sugar and infection by waiting until he's ready to emerge
19. Build your baby's muscles – they'll be strong and firm, and ready to help him feed and flex at term
20. Maximize those little lungs – babies born just two or more weeks early can have twice the number of complications with breathing
21. Ignore people who say an induced birth is more convenient. Nothing is convenient about a longer labor and increasing your risk of cesarean surgery
22. Respond to requests to speed baby's birth with the facts: Inductions often create more painful labors and can lead to cesarean surgery
23. Let others do the heavy lifting – and the extra housecleaning
24. Splurge on pedicures – or ask a friend to do them for you, especially when you can't see or touch your feet
25. Relish in the fact that right now you're the perfect mom – your healthy pregnancy habits are growing baby the best possible way
26. Finish well – more time in the womb usually means less time in the hospital

Enjoy this time

27. Relax! Babies are usually so much easier to care for in the womb
28. Shamelessly wear comfy, stretchy clothes
29. Postpone changing the eventual 5,000+ diapers baby will use
30. Be out and about without having to buckle, unbuckle or rebuckle baby into her car seat or stroller while running errands
31. Carry your most stylish purses, especially the ones too small to hold diapers and wipes
32. Relish parenting – right now, you know exactly where baby is and what he's doing
33. Snooze when you can – the amount of sleep you now enjoy is actually quite a lot compared to the interruptions ahead
34. Massage remains a must – ask your partner to help ease the aches
35. Enjoy nights out without paying for a babysitter
36. Indulge in shopping without the added responsibilities of baby in tow
37. Redecorate your house around your nursery's theme
38. Prop up your paperback – your burgeoning belly peaks at just the right reading height
39. Experience the best-possible birth experience; don't rush it
40. Write your own healthy reason – if it gets baby a full 40 weeks of pregnancy, it deserves to be on this list