



## TEACHER GUIDE

# Letters from Your Unborn Baby My Ninth Month



Dear MOM,

My growing time inside you is almost over. I will be born this month! I can hardly wait to be in your arms!

Do you wonder what I'm like? I will be like you in some ways and like Dad in other ways. I will learn a lot from you.

### ABOUT ME

I can safely be born any time now. My lungs are mature. I weigh about 7 to 7 1/2 pounds and I am about 20 inches long. I may seem less active now than I've been because I've moved down into your pelvis. There is not much room to move around down here. Most babies are born sometime between two weeks before and two weeks after their due date.

### ABOUT YOU

You probably feel REALLY pregnant now! You might be having all the pregnancy symptoms we talked about, like constipation, heartburn, indigestion, backaches, general discomfort, hemorrhoids, increased urination, fatigue and increased appetite. Don't worry, all your hard work and patience will pay off soon. Can you believe the 9 months are almost over?

### HOW WILL YOU KNOW YOU ARE IN LABOR?

Our doctor will tell you when you are ready to start labor. Here is a list of signs to let you know that labor is beginning.

#### ***CONTRACTIONS***

Contractions are a tightening of the uterus that occur in a regular pattern and get stronger and happen more often when you are in labor. Contractions may feel like pains in your lower back.

#### ***SHOW***

The word "show" describes a mucus and puss discharge from the uterus. Show is usually pink in color. A "show" tells you the cervix is beginning to open.

### ***BROKEN BAG OF WATER***

A gush or uncontrolled trickle of water from your vagina means your bag of water has broken. It is time to get to the hospital!!!

### ***ARE YOU READY?***

I may come any time now. Is your suitcase packed?

You will need to pack these things:

robe	toothbrush
slippers	toothpaste
nightgown	clothes for you to wear home
comb	clothes for me to wear home

### **FIRST LOOK AT ME**

I won't look like a perfect newborn right after I am born.

I will need a few days to recover from being born.

I will look awfully charming in my own special way!

### ***ODD SHAPED HEAD***

My head will have a cone shape to it from traveling through the birth canal. My head will relax into its regular shape in a couple of days. My head will look big compared to the rest of my body, but my body will catch up soon.

### ***HAIR***

The hair I am born with may change as I grow. The color might lighten or darken, or I may get more hair later.

### ***VERNIX CASEOSA COATING***

This is a cheesy substance that covered my body when I was in the womb. It will disappear over time.

### ***LANUGO***

This fine downy hair covering my body. I will shed this hair in the first week after being born.

### ***PUFFY BODY PARTS***

Some parts of my body may look swollen at first. With time, the swelling will go down and my skin will have its normal texture and color.

I think you will be surprised how fast I will grow and change in the first few weeks. I am finally out in the world. Hooray!

## **CRYING BABIES**

Sometimes new moms get frustrated with babies because we cry all the time. Babies will not always do what their mothers want them to do. I may not sleep or eat at the times you think would be best. We will both be adjusting to all the changes. I will cry for many reasons. It is my way of telling you that I need you. Here are a few things I might be trying to tell you when I cry:

*I need my diaper changed.*

*I am hungry.*

*I have gas, please burp me.*

*Give me a pacifier.*

*I am hot or cold, please change the temperature.*

*Hold me.*

*I want to hear my voice.*

*Rock me.*

*Play with me.*

*I am scared.*

*I want your attention.*

See Mom, I will never cry because you are a bad mother. I will cry a lot until I know how to talk.

## **SAFETY**

Before I come home to live with you, there are a few safety items you need to think about. Do I have a safe place to sleep? If you don't want to buy a new crib, check the newspaper for a used crib. Make sure the crib bars/slats are close together (2-3/8 inches or less apart) so I can't get my head or limbs stuck in the bars.

Do you have a car seat for me? It is the law that I have to ride in one in the car and it is for my own safety. If you don't want to buy one, ask your hospital or the local public health department if you can rent or borrow a seat.

Do you have emergency phone numbers for my doctor, the hospital, the police and the fire department close to the phone? Have them handy especially when I have a babysitter.

I will need baby shots during my first few years. Your doctor or the public health department will tell you when I need these shots called immunizations. They are important so I don't get sick.

I will not talk or crawl for a while, but pretty soon I will be scooting around the house. Do you have the house "baby-proofed" yet? Check around the house for electrical cords, or dangerous chemicals that are in my reach. You need to put medicines and chemicals up high so I can't get to them. I will surely get into some trouble and I don't want to hurt myself.

Lastly Mom, you need to take good care of yourself during the end of your pregnancy. Be sure to get plenty of rest and call the doctor if you experience any of these symptoms:

**CALL OUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS APPEAR**

1. Any spotting (a small flow of blood or water from the vagina)
2. Sudden swelling of your hands, legs, face or eyes
3. Any unusual signs of pain - abdominal pain that is constant and severe
4. Severe headaches or dizziness
5. Blurred vision or dimness
6. Nausea, vomiting more than once within several hours
7. If you can't feel me move for longer than 24 hours
8. Urinary problems - decrease in urine output or pain or burning upon urination

**THINKING AHEAD**

Now that you are almost through with this pregnancy, you know that being pregnant is a beautiful, natural experience. However, it is a lot of responsibility and it takes a lot of hard work. After I am born, the responsibility and the hard work will not go away. Being a parent takes dedication and commitment.

I'm here at last. We have learned a lot together, and I am glad you will be my Mom. Thanks for making my journey a pleasant one.

**Love,            Your Baby**

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