



## The 5<sup>th</sup> Month

Weeks 20 to 24

### *Your Baby*

- Your baby will weigh about 1 1/2 pounds and be about 12 inches long by the end of this month
- Its skin is covered by a white cheesy secretion (vernix caseosa) that protects its skin as it moves in the amniotic fluid
- Its heartbeat is now easy to hear at the doctor's office through the Doppler
- Movements of its arms and legs are easier for you to feel now
- Some hair may be present on its head
- Its eyelids are still closed
- Its skin is wrinkled and red but slowly being filled out with fat
- Its fingernails continue to grow

### *Your Body*

- You will continue to gain about ¾ pound a week now or about 3 to 4 pounds per month
- Your baby will begin to move a lot; you will notice certain patterns of quiet and activity
- The top of the uterus can be felt at the bellybutton or just above it
- Your breasts continue to grow larger; they may get softer and the veins will start to show
- You may be more conscious of colostrum leaking from your breasts
- Constipation may become more troublesome now and may continue through the end of pregnancy
- Your hair may begin to feel thicker and oilier
- You usually feel good; people begin to talk about how well you look – you have the “glow of pregnancy”
- You may have some feelings from time to time of not being able to cope; this can happen almost anytime during pregnancy

### *Your Responsibilities*

- Continue your prenatal check-ups
- Find out about classes for expectant parents in your area and make plans to enroll in time to learn the breathing and relaxation exercises needed for labor
- Continue to eat a balanced diet making sure you have enough milk and milk products
- Keep up the routine of walking every day and doing the Kegel and pelvic rock exercises
- Avoid smoking, alcohol, junk foods, caffeine and unprescribed medications
- Be careful to remember your vitamins and iron supplements every day
- Drink a total of 80 ounces of water or other fluids each day
- Take time to purchase one or more well-fitting support bras
- Take time for a rest period on your side every day (it doesn't matter which side)
- Talk about any concerns you or your partner may have about the responsibilities you will have to assume as parents
- Seek out special friends and family members to help you to deal with depressed or scared feelings, as well as sharing the fun and anticipation that goes with having a baby