

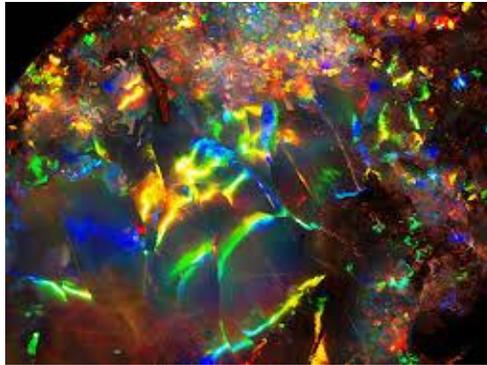
Freestyle Note:

You are a strong Opal woman & the child you are carrying is precious.

From your Opal friend, Darly - Founder of The Opal Place.

If you've ever seen an uncut or unpolished opal rock, it doesn't look very impressive & is often easily over-looked. But when the time & care is put into polishing & nurturing that rock, the result is always the revelation of the most beautiful & totally unique gem - **an Opal**

Darly Royan Paraha



Every Opal is unique to itself & has such a depth of beauty that this world sorely needs. You are that precious Opal.

**Beautiful
Precious
&
Unique**

Never doubt yourself or wish that you were someone else. Instead, take the time to start reclaiming who you truly are.

Prison is going to be just a part of your life-story, but you & this child you carry are eternal. **Stand Strong.**

Darly Royan Paraha

21 WEEKS PREGNANT

Have you started thinking about names yet?

Names are very important. Our name tells a story of who we are & what we shall be & become. The name that you choose will have an impact on your child as they grow. Think of it this way: As parents we don't get to spend every-single minute protecting our children for all of their lives. And for us Opal parents (parent in prison) we may get to spend even less time with our child due to our incarceration. But by choosing your baby a name filled with your love, care, hopes & dreams - you will in effect be providing blessings each time their name is spoken through-out their life - So choose wisely, because the well-being of your child's future is in your hands.

You've probably got some good names in mind all ready, but over the next weeks I'll add in a few more that I've found on the internet for you to think over.

Name	Country /Area of Origin	Pronunciation	Boy / Girl or Both	History /Means
Ayomide	Africa	A-O-MEE-Deh	Boy or Girl	Happiness is Coming
Jabari	African / Arabic	Jah-Barr-ee	Boy	Courageous
Rhett	Welsh / Middle Dutch	R-ett	Boy	Ardent, Fiery & gives good advice or counsel
Ayana	Africa	Ar-YA-nuh	Girl	Beautiful Blossom
Ihaka	Maori	E-har-ka	Boy	Isaac / spear / thrust
Royan	Irish, Dutch, Sanskrit, Arabic	Roy-arn	Boy / Girl	Red haired (Irish) or Independent & focussed.
Mi Cha	Korean		Girl	Beautiful Daughter

"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches". Proverbs 22: 1

The Opal Place - Our Place of Inspiration

www.theopalplace.co.nz * Postal: Po Box 178, Hawera 4640, New Zealand

How Big Is Baby at 21 Weeks?

At 21 weeks pregnant, baby is as big as a head of **endive**. At 10.5 inches and about 12.7 ounces, baby's big enough now that you've probably been feeling his or her fetal movements more and more lately.

Question: What's an endive? (Endives aren't a well known food in New Zealand)

Answer: Endive is a member of the **chicory** family, which includes radishes and curly endive. It has a crisp texture and a sweet, nutty flavor with a pleasantly mild bitterness & is great served raw or cooked.



Photo of apple's & endive's



21 Weeks Pregnant Is How Many Months?

21 weeks pregnant is 4 months and about three weeks. Now that you're more than halfway done with month five, you're a majority of the way through your pregnancy!

21 WEEKS PREGNANT SYMPTOMS

Common 21 weeks pregnant symptoms are kind of like a sneak preview of the third trimester. Here's what you might be feeling at week 21 of pregnancy:

- **Heartburn and/or indigestion.** Avoid fatty and greasy foods and other triggers (spicy). If the source of your discomfort is a mystery, keeping a food diary could help you figure it out.
- **Braxton Hicks contractions.** Your uterus might occasionally feel tight as it practices for labour. This is totally normal as long as the contractions go away when you switch positions. Let your doctor know about any pain or contractions that don't stop.
- **Leaky boobs.** Your milk ducts will be fully developed by the end of this trimester—just in case of an early arrival.
- **Dry, itchy skin.** Your skin is stretching over your growing bump, making it

Do you have any of these symptoms? If you do write or draw about your experiences & feelings:

more irritated by the day. Lather up with a pregnancy-safe body oil or lotion to help your skin stay moisturized and hopefully less itchy. Also, if you develop a rash, let the prison staff know right away, since that could be a sign of an annoying pregnancy condition called PUPPP.

- **Stretch marks.** Your skin gets pulled thinner as baby grows, causing tiny tears beneath the surface of your skin. Stretch marks are more common for some women simply because of family history, or because of sudden weight gain.

Question: What is Braxton Hicks?

Answer: Braxton Hicks are when the womb contracts and relaxes. Sometimes they are known as false labour pains. Not all women will have Braxton Hicks contractions. If you do, you'll usually feel them during the second or third trimester. Braxton Hicks are completely normal and many women experience them during pregnancy.

Question: What does Braxton Hicks feel like?

Answer: Some women describe Braxton Hicks contractions as tightening in the abdomen that comes and goes. Many women say these "false" contractions feel like mild menstrual cramps. Braxton Hicks contractions may be uncomfortable, but they do not cause labour or open the cervix.

21 WEEKS PREGNANT BELLY

In fact, all the weight you gain during pregnancy isn't just padding for baby—it all serves a really important purpose. Here's a logical way to think of it: Of the approximately 30 pounds you'll gain throughout your pregnancy, there's a whole lot more than fat. Here's what makes up that weight:

- An average full-term baby = 7.5 pounds
- Placenta = 1.5 pounds
- Uterus = 2 pounds
- Amniotic fluid = 2 pounds
- Maternal stores of fat, protein, and other nutrients (needed for breastfeeding!) = 7 pounds
- Breast tissue (also for BFing, of course) = 2 pounds
- Increased fluid volume = 4 pounds
- Increased blood volume = 4 pounds

(1 pound weight = 0.45 kilograms)

See? All those pounds are doing a lot of good, keeping baby alive and healthy. We women don't often stop and think about how miraculous our bodies are.

We women are amazing.
(& yes...that means YOU)

Wondering what’s going on with your 21-week fetus?

As baby's digestive system preps for the outside world, he or she's manufacturing meconium—the tarry black substance you'll find in the first dirty diaper.



Photo: First poop of meconium



The Importance of writing a journal for your child

I never really knew my birth mother as a person. The reason being is that during my child hood my only contact with her was during visits which I found traumatic. My birth mother had mental health issues and that only added to my miss-understanding about her. My beloved foster mother, also caused me no end of sadness by never openly telling me how proud she was that I played hockey for my country. Instead she always chuckled and said something along the lines of "oh what is it you play Darly..soccer, hockey or smockey?"

What I'd like (love) you to consider doing is this. Start a journal now for your child to read when they are older . In this journal capture your hopes and dreams and importantly put into words the struggles you are working on over-coming. Write out your feelings as you carry your unborn baby and then through the years you are incarcerated. In your journal, write, draw, create lyrics, make plans and importantly when your filling in your journal, create each page and entry with love.



Many of us Opal mums miss out years of our children's lives and sadly some of us never get to spend any time with our children at all.- So

Later when I was in my early 40's I finally got hold of my full childhood social welfare records. In amongst this huge pile of documents I found many hand-written letters from my birth mother to the social welfare enquiring about my wellbeing. I was touched by the obvious effort she took in writing these letters during my entire child-hood. There were also countless letters written from my foster mother informing the social welfare of my successes with hockey.



Point is, if I had never got to read the letters that had been written so long ago I never would have got to appreciate my birth mother as a parent, or understood that my foster mother was actually really proud of my achievements. The effect of these letters on me was simple - they helped to heal me.

tell your story directly from your heart to your child. Say everything you want to say because it's really important that they know you and of your love for them.

Any woman or man is made stronger by the pure love of a mother.

Have no doubt that you WILL be that loving mother.

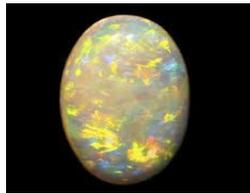
Darly - Founder of The Opal Place



I am a Strong Woman

Protective & Wise as a Lioness * Blessed is the Fruit of my Womb

My Diary Note:



The Opal Place - Our Place of Inspiration

www.theopalplace.co.nz * Postal: Po Box 178, Hawera 4640, New Zealand