

Freestyle Note:

6 WEEKS PREGNANT

Surprise! Okay...wow - You've just come into prison & after all the health checks you've now found out that you're pregnant. What a wild roller-coaster ride your feelings & emotions are on right? Firstly, **congratulations**, because **you & your** baby both deserve to be celebrated. Just so you know, I've been in prison & while I wasn't pregnant when I went inside, I was a mum. While you're adjusting to your pregnancy & being inside, you need to focus on looking after yourself. **Rest** when you can, **eat**, even though you might not be hungry & **walk** as much as you can because it'll help you relax. & never ever forget that:

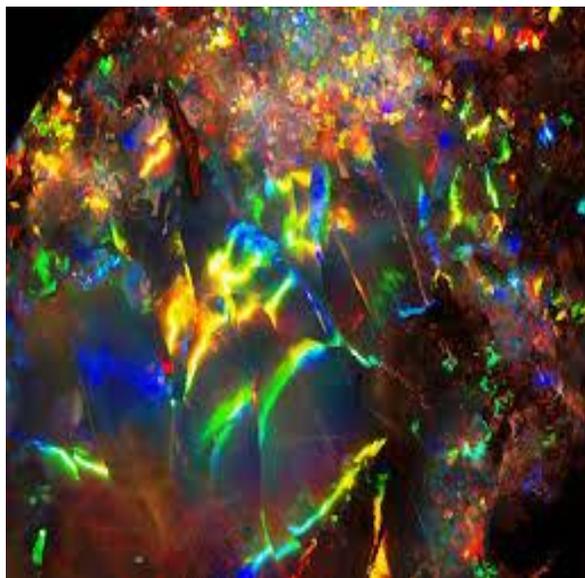
You are a strong Opal woman & the child you are carrying is precious.

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 overlooked. 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

The Opal Place - Our Place of Inspiration

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

6 WEEKS PREGNANT

At week six, pregnancy is still new to you, so it's normal to feel emotional.

How Big Is Baby at 6 Weeks?

At 6 weeks pregnant, baby is the size of a sweet pea or a chick pea. The average embryo at week six is about .25 inches and will double in size again next week. (1 pound weight = 0.45 kilograms weight & 1 inch = 2.54 centimetres).

6 Weeks Pregnant Is How Many Months?

At 6 weeks, you're one month and about one week pregnant even though it's probably been only a week or two (or even less) since you found out you were expecting. That's because pregnancy is measured starting with the first day of your last menstrual period. You probably conceived in week 2 or 3 (depending on the length of your menstrual cycle).

6 WEEKS PREGNANT SYMPTOMS

The most common 6 weeks pregnant symptoms include:

- **Fatigue.** You're so drained because your body's still getting used to your changing hormones. Get as much extra rest as possible.
- **Nausea.** If you are experiencing nausea it's a good idea to find foods that help settle your stomach and to keep them on hand for regular snacking. Useful foods could be: bread, plain crackers, maize, or rice. Try to keep a little food aside (if it is permitted in your facility) to nibble on as having an empty stomach can trigger bouts of nausea.
- **Sore breasts.** Your boobs are likely sore thanks to increased blood flow. Can you believe your body is already starting to prep to breastfeed your baby? Yep, even at just six weeks!
- **Frequent urination.** If you find yourself having to pee more than usual, it's because the pregnancy hormone hCG is directing extra blood flow to the pelvic area. Heading to the bathroom more often is normal, but if you have painful urination or have the urge to go but are unable to, tell the prison staff right away. Those are signs of a **UTI (See below)**.
- **Gas and bloating.** The pregnancy hormone progesterone can cause these tummy troubles. Drink lots of water and eat fiber-rich .
- **Mood swings.** Yup, crankiness and emotional extremes are because of the hormones. Fatigue and fluctuations in blood sugar can contribute too. Do your best to eat and sleep well.
- **Cramping and spotting.** At 6 weeks pregnant and any time in early pregnancy cramping and spotting are both normal. If any pain in your stomach is severe (stronger than period cramps) or if bleeding becomes heavy like a period, then let the prison staff know.

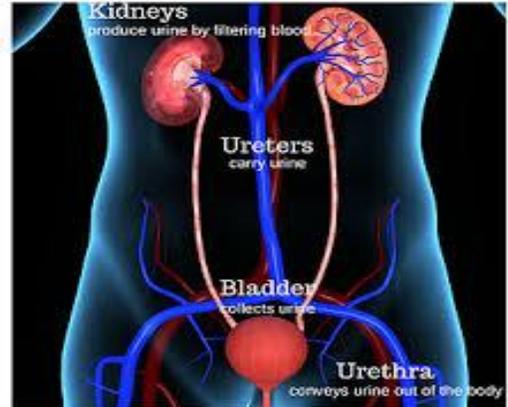
Do you have any of these symptoms? If you do write or draw about your experiences & feelings:

WHAT'S A UTI?

A **urinary tract infection (UTI)** is an infection in any part of your urinary system such as your:

- Kidneys,
- Uterus,
- Bladder
- & your urethra.

Most infections involve the lower urinary tract, the bladder and the urethra.



What are the Symptoms of UTIs?

You might experience any one or combination of these symptoms:

- Urinary urgency - meaning a quick and sudden urge to pee
- Pain or a burning sensation with urination
- Foul-smelling or cloudy urine
- Bloody urine
- Pain in the pubic bone area

Here's some tips to help reduce the chances of getting a UTI:

Practice good hygiene. Wipe from front to back after you urinate (pee) &/or defecate (poo) to prevent the spreading of bacteria.

Try to avoid sitting directly on a dirty toilet seat. This is because you can pick up germs of bacteria from another person. If possible squat over the seat or place toilet paper on the seat to protect yourself.

Wash your vaginal and anal areas daily. If you have soap - use this and wash all of the soap off. You need to remove all soap after washing yourself because the soap will have picked up any bacteria and germs. Also if you leave soap residue around your vaginal and anal areas it can cause irritation.

Important: Wash your hands after going to the toilet and before eating any food.

Stay hydrated. This means to be mindful of drinking clean water frequently. The reason that drinking water is useful in guarding against a UTI is that when you pee you're also clearing any germs out from your bladder and urethra.

Tip: Try to drink about eight 8 cups/glasses of water a day



Always wipe front to back to keep any harmful bacteria away from your vaginal area & wash your hands after.



Cut back on Coffee & Chocolate.

Caffeine and chocolate can irritate the bladder & inflammation makes bacteria more likely to stick around.

Note: Caffeine in your diet (from coffee & chocolate) also will pass through your blood stream to your unborn baby. For this reason try to limit your coffee intake to no more than two cups per day (or 200 milligrams per day) & only have a small amount of chocolate in order to be safe during pregnancy.



Drink cranberry juice. Cranberries can prevent E. coli from adhering to the bladder.



& just so you know: these resources are available for Opal Women all over the world & so there's a huge variation in what foods we get to choose from depending on what country were incarcerated in. But please do your best to eat healthy, my Opal friend - because you & your baby are so precious. True.

Okay ...well, getting hold of Cranberry Juice might be hard in most prisons (!) But do your best to eat foods high in Vitamin C such as:

- Citrus fruits, oranges & mandarines.
- Cantaloupe
- Kiwi fruit.
- Mango.
- Papaya.
- Pineapple.
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Papayas (Pawpaws) ...

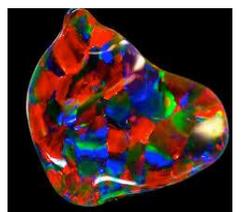
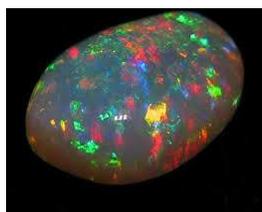
Urinate frequently (Pee a lot!). Go when you feel the urge to go, and spend the extra few minutes to be sure you have emptied your bladder completely.



6 WEEKS PREGNANT BELLY

Though it's common to be bloated at 6 weeks pregnant, you likely don't look pregnant at all. Inside your six weeks pregnant belly, your rapidly growing pea-sized embryo will soon take up a greater amount of space in your belly.

You're probably wondering what's going on inside your 6-week pregnant belly. Well, many of the crucial areas of baby development have already started. Baby's circulating blood with an increasingly sophisticated circulatory system. Baby might even be wiggling his or her paddle-like hands and feet. Your 6-week embryo is about to get cuter too, since he or she is starting to sprout a nose, eyes, ears, chin, and cheeks.



The Opal Place - Our Place of Inspiration

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

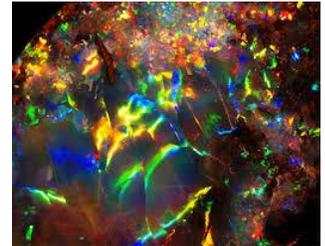


Photo: Plastic doll showing actual size

The relationship between a mother & her child is important - Being an Opal (person in prison) mum adds a different set of dynamics to the relationship, but it does not alter the fundamental truth which is that you will be this child's mum.

Parenting from inside prison is different & we have to face that. But your role as mum is still just as (if not more!) important to the development and well-being of your child.

Keep Heart. You are a Strong Opal Woman & your love will shine like a flame to direct & protect your child through-out their life & bring you both great joy.



I am a Strong Woman

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

My Diary Note: