

Freestyle Note:

9 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:

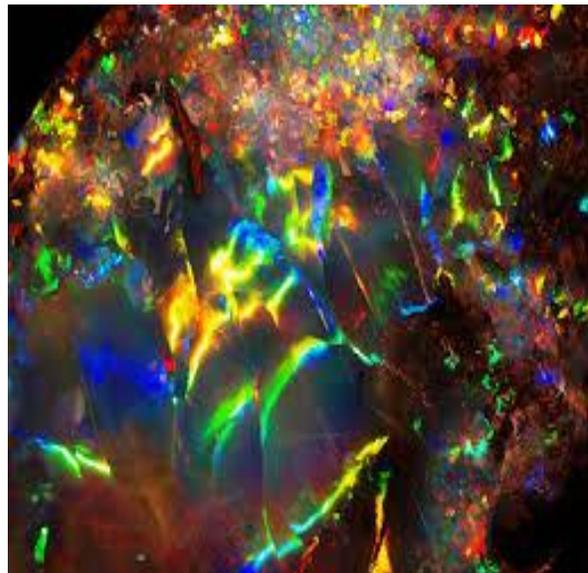
You are a strong Opal woman & the child you are carrying is precious.

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

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9 WEEKS PREGNANT

How Big Is Baby at 9 Weeks?

Baby is the size of a cherry at 9 weeks pregnant. Your 9-week fetus measures around .9 inches and weighs about .07 ounces, and his or her growth is picking up steam!

9 Weeks Pregnant Is How Many Months?

At 9 weeks, you're two months pregnant. This week, baby's no longer an embryo, it's now a fetus. That means he or she is becoming more and more baby-like.

9 WEEKS PREGNANT SYMPTOMS

Right now, the pregnancy hormones circulating through your body is at its peak level. That means at 9 weeks, some pregnancy symptoms may be at their most severe. Hang in there, because you're just weeks away from those hormones levelling out a bit, leaving you feeling a lot more like yourself. Here's what 9 weeks pregnant symptoms you may be experiencing:

- **Mood swings.** Because your hormones are still changing, and also because other symptoms, such as nausea & fatigue are bothering you, you may find your emotions more difficult to control.
- **Morning sickness.** Up to 80 percent of pregnant women experience some form of morning sickness. It really should be called all-day sickness though! If you're suffering from nausea, you might just be feeling a little ill, or you may be vomiting regularly. Drink water and eat small amounts throughout the day.
- **Frequent urination.** Because your uterus is expanding and because there's major blood flow to your pelvic area, you may be heading to the bathroom more often than you did pre-pregnancy. Don't let that stop you from drinking lots of water. It's important that drink a lot of water.
- **Fatigue.** While your hormones are working overtime to grow and develop your 9-week fetus, you will be left feeling totally exhausted. Sleep more, if you can. In the second trimester, you'll get some of your energy back.
- **Nasal congestion.** Surprise! Pregnancy can cause higher mucus production in the body—an unexpected symptom—so you might need to keep tissues handy.
- **Headaches.** Because of your surging hormones you might get headaches. Deal with this by eating at least every few hours, drinking lots of water and getting plenty of sleep

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

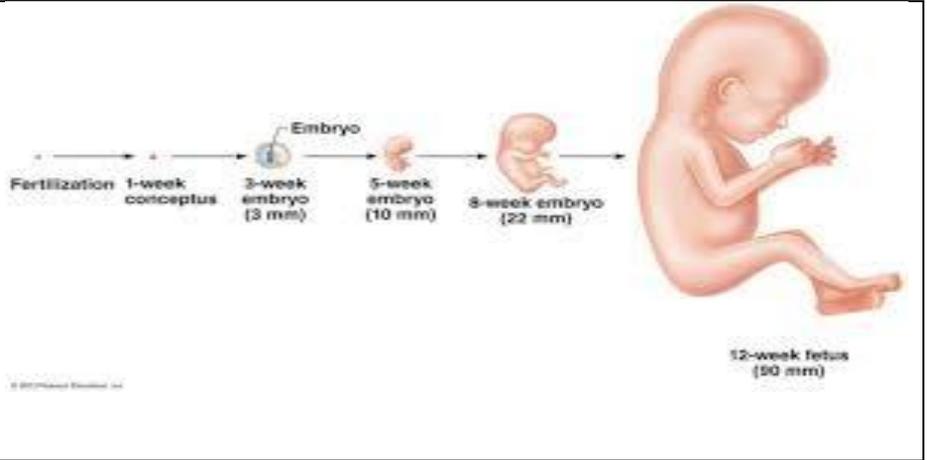
9 WEEKS PREGNANT BELLY

At 9 weeks pregnant your uterus is expanding to accommodate your growing fetus. When you touch your 9 weeks pregnant belly, you'll probably find that your lower abdomen feels a bit firmer, that's the uterus. You may even be showing a bit at 9 weeks! Your uterus will begin to grow out of your pelvis in coming weeks.

At week 9 of pregnancy your baby is no longer an embryo, now he or she is a fetus!

Question: What is the difference between an embryo and a fetus?

Answer: The distinction between an embryo and a fetus is made based on gestational age.



Inside your week 9 pregnant belly, your baby's developing more distinct facial features.

At 9 weeks pregnant, miscarriage risk is on a lot of women's minds. Rest assured that once you've seen or heard a heartbeat, the risk is only 3 percent. In coming weeks, it will lower even more.



A Plastic Replica - showing size of actual foetus

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

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.



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?"

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.

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 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: