

Comprehensive Care Center for Multiples

Words to Know for a Multiple Pregnancy

- **Amniocentesis:** A procedure that takes a small amount of amniotic fluid (the liquid that surrounds the fetus) from a pregnant woman's belly to test for a genetic condition. This is done with a thin needle after 15 weeks.
- **Amniotic sac:** The sac that contains the fetus.
- **Aneuploidy:** An abnormal number of chromosomes.
- **Body mass index (BMI):** A measure of a person's weight in relation to their height.
- **Cesarean delivery:** Delivery of a baby through an incision made in the mother's abdomen and womb (uterus).
- **Chorionic villus sampling (CVS):** A procedure that takes a sample out a tiny piece of the placenta through a thin needle. It is usually performed at 10–13 weeks.
- **Embryo:** The fertilized egg from conception to about eight weeks, when it is then called a "fetus."
- **Fetus:** The developing, unborn baby.
- **Fraternal (dizygotic) twins:** Twins that are conceived when two separate eggs are fertilized and implanted in the uterus at the same time; they have a different genetic makeup.
- **Gestation:** The period between the conception and birth of a child.
- **Identical (monozygotic) twins:** Twins that are conceived when one egg becomes fertilized and then splits into two separate embryos; they share the same genetic makeup.
- **Placenta:** The organ that connects the fetus to the uterus to deliver the baby nutrients and oxygen, eliminate waste and produce hormones to support the pregnancy.
- **Prenatal:** During the pregnancy, before the birth of the child.
- **Singleton pregnancy:** A pregnancy involving one child.
- **Structural anomaly:** When some part of the fetus does not develop normally and is altered in some way.
- **Trimester:** One-third of the pregnancy duration. The first trimester is week 1 through 13, the second trimester is week 13 through 26, and the third trimester is week 26 through childbirth.
- **Ultrasound:** A type of technology that produces images of a fetus within the womb and is used for monitoring the fetus' development.
- **Vertex position/presentation:** When the baby's head is down, pointing directly toward the birth canal.
- **Zygosity:** The condition of being developed from one or more eggs.
- **Zygote:** The fertilized egg cell that results from the union of a female gamete (egg or ovum) with a male gamete (sperm).