

Elective (Scheduled) Delivery of Your Baby

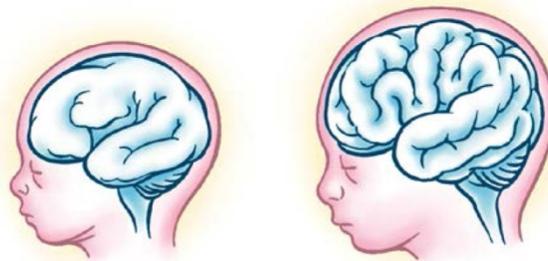
What is it?

A scheduled delivery is when you or your doctor pick the day that you will deliver your baby. This might be by cesarean section or inducing your labor. A normal pregnancy lasts 40 weeks. Some babies need to be delivered early (before 39 weeks) for a medical reason. Often it's done to fit the doctor's schedule. You might ask to have the baby early to better fit your plans. It is important to know why this is not healthy for your baby. Then you can make the best choice for you and your baby.

Why is it not a good thing to do?

- Medical research shows that babies born earlier than 39 weeks (one week before the due date) are at a much higher risk of having problems
- These problems might be: breathing problems, trouble feeding, yellow jaundice, trouble staying warm and more days in the special care nursery
- Your baby's brain at 35 weeks weighs a little over half of what it would weigh at your due date
- The liver, lungs, eyes and ears continue to grow up to 40 weeks
- Babies born before 39 weeks have been shown to have lower math and reading scores in first grade
- They are more likely to have behavioral problems
- Staying pregnant until at least 39 weeks will give your baby a better chance of having a healthy life.

A baby's brain at 35 weeks weighs only two-thirds of what it will weigh at 39 to 40 weeks.



35 weeks

39 to 40 weeks

What do I need to do?

- Ask your doctor if there is a medical reason for you to deliver your baby early
- If there is no medical reason, talk with them about waiting until 40 weeks to give your baby more time to grow before being born