Critical periods of your baby’s development

**WHAT ARE STRUCTURAL BIRTH DEFECTS?**
Structural birth defects are abnormalities in the structure of body parts. Examples include cleft palate, heart defects, and spina bifida.

**WHAT ARE FUNCTIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS?**
Functional birth defects are problems in how a body system works. Examples include hearing and vision loss.

**WHAT CAUSES BIRTH DEFECTS?**
Birth defects can be caused by genetic (mutations) or environmental factors (teratogens). Examples of teratogens include alcohol, certain medications, and infections.

This chart shows the most sensitive times of a baby’s development during the 38 weeks of pregnancy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD OF THE EGG</th>
<th>PERIOD OF THE EMBRYO</th>
<th>PERIOD OF THE FETUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEKS 1-2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7 8 12 16 38</td>
<td>20-36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BRAIN/SPINAL CORD (CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM)**
- Heart

**ARMS / LEGS**
- Ears

**EYES**

**TEETH**

**PALATE**

**EXTERNAL GENITALS**

Ask the Experts:

- Call 877.311.8972
- Visit mothertobaby.org

Research Fueled by Moms:

For a list of our current observational studies and to see if you qualify, visit mothertobaby.org/studies