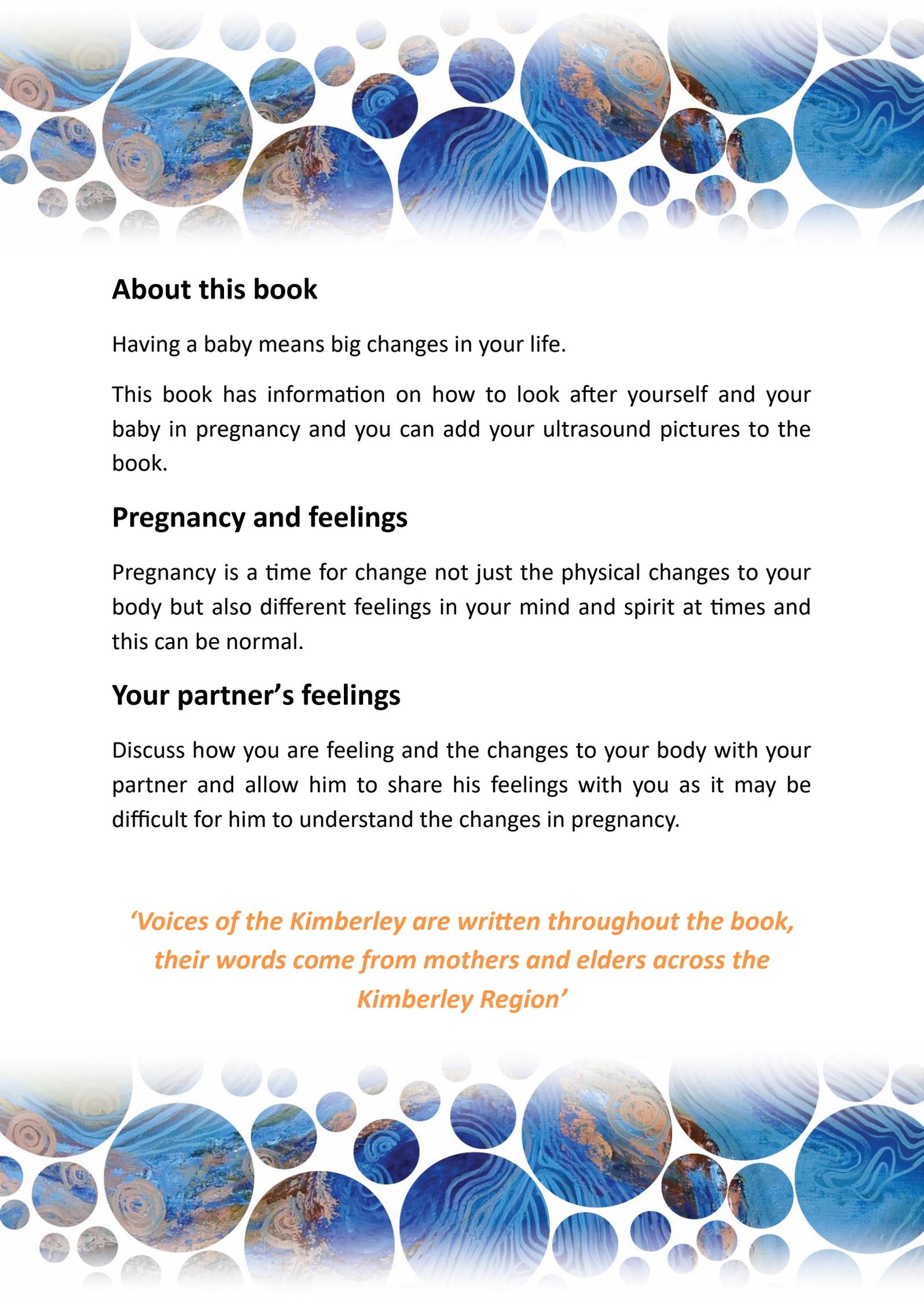


# The Kimberley Pregnancy Book





The Biny tree is a healing tree used in smoking ceremonies for good and bad things. It can also be used as bush medicine to treat skin sores by boiling the bark and bathing in it. The Wandal (Coolamon) is used to carry the baby or food. – Rosemary Coffin, Artist –



## **About this book**

Having a baby means big changes in your life.

This book has information on how to look after yourself and your baby in pregnancy and you can add your ultrasound pictures to the book.

## **Pregnancy and feelings**

Pregnancy is a time for change not just the physical changes to your body but also different feelings in your mind and spirit at times and this can be normal.

## **Your partner's feelings**

Discuss how you are feeling and the changes to your body with your partner and allow him to share his feelings with you as it may be difficult for him to understand the changes in pregnancy.

***'Voices of the Kimberley are written throughout the book,  
their words come from mothers and elders across the  
Kimberley Region'***

## Midwife and clinic staff will help you stay healthy

Smoking, alcohol or other drugs while pregnant can harm you and your baby. If you smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs now is the time to stop.

Quitline 13 7848





## **Go to clinic or hospital**

If you feel sick or vomiting too much.

Any blood or fluid loss.

Baby not moving so much.

Strong pains in your tummy.

Strong headaches.

Burning urine.

If you are worried or scared and don't know what is happening.



## Best for you and baby to be checked at clinic

Check up every month until 7 months (28 weeks).

Then check up every 2 weeks until 8 months (36 weeks).



Then you need a check-up every week until the baby is born.

You will be asked questions about your health and your family's health.

Write down any questions you might have.

***'Women ate plenty of bush tucker to stay strong, Konkaberry, bush tomatoes, witchety grubs and goanna'***

Sometimes when women are  
pregnant or have had a baby  
they can feel...  
sad... alone...  
really no good.



**Don't be shame,  
just speak up.**

It's okay to talk to someone  
you trust - family, friend,  
healthworker, nurse or a  
doctor.



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Health  
WA Country Health Service



## Depression

Talk to someone you can trust; family, friend, midwife, health worker, or your local clinic if you are:

Very tired or sad for a long time.

Anxious or frustrated.

Angry or crying for no good reason.



## Every visit the midwife will check:

Your blood pressure.

*High blood pressure (Eclampsia) can make you and baby sick and baby can be born early and too small.*



## At Some Visits:

Doctor will listen to your heart and lungs.

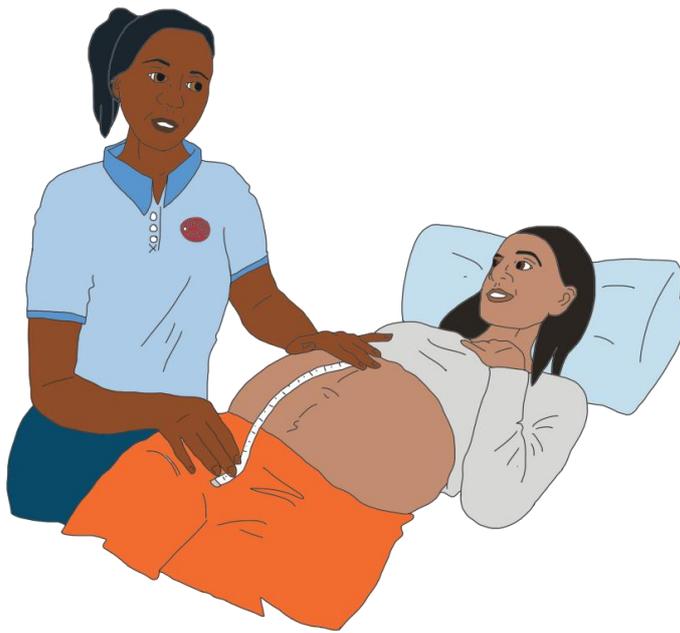
Vaginal swabs need to be tested in pregnancy to make sure no infection will get into your baby bag.



Blood tests for weak blood (anaemia) and sugar (diabetes). Urine tests for infections and check kidneys are healthy.

## Every visit the Midwife will:

Feel and measure your tummy to check if baby is growing well.



*If baby is too small and not growing, baby may need to be born early and may have breathing or feeding problems.*

Listen to your baby's heartbeat.



## **Family and Domestic violence**

The background features a large, stylized illustration. On the left is a dark grey silhouette of a man standing, facing right. On the right is a grey silhouette of a woman sitting on the floor, leaning against a wall, facing left. The background is a gradient of dark blue at the top and bottom, with a large red and orange circular shape behind the silhouettes.

**Family violence has a big impact on everyone's health, especially women and children and can affect babies even before they are born.**

**Being stressed out, living with violence has a big effect on pregnant women and can affect how baby grows and develops in your belly.**

**Speak to someone you trust or clinic staff for help  
WA Women's Domestic Violence Helpline  
(24 hours) 1800 007 339**

## Alcohol

If you drink any alcohol while you're pregnant, baby is in danger of getting Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong condition of permanent brain damage and birth defects. **Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service 9194 2640.**



NO GROG, STRONG BABY



STRONG MIND

STRONG BODY

STRONG BABY

MESSAGES FROM THE MUMS OF THE FITZROY VALLEY



## Smoking



Can stop baby growing and baby may be born too early or too small.

**Quitline 13 7848**

Try the **'Quit for you quit for two'** APP.

Talk to your local clinic to help you quit smoking.

**NO SMOKING, STRONG BABY**

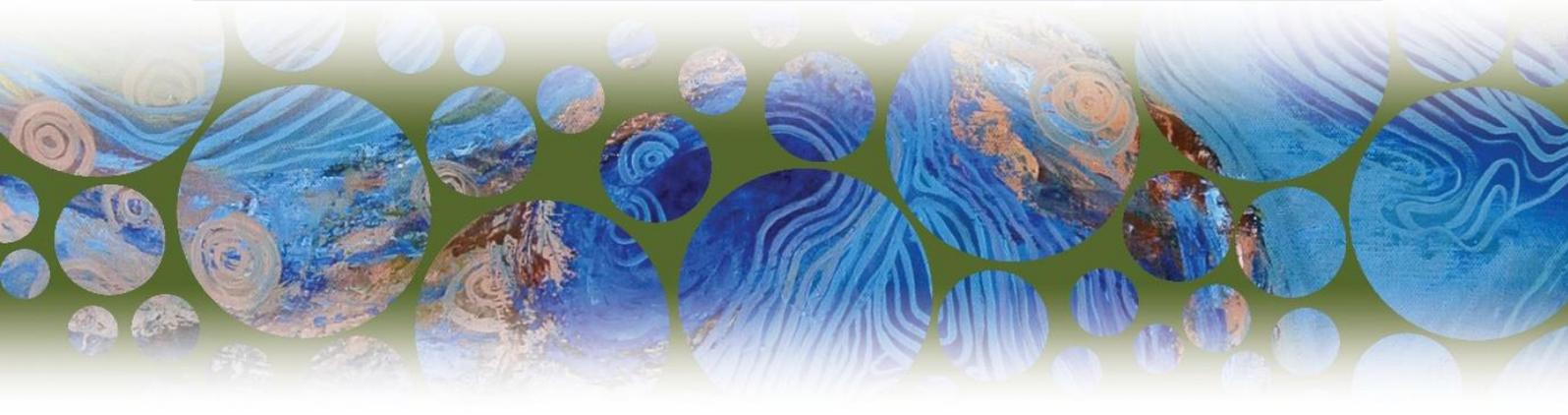


**STRONG MIND**

**STRONG BODY**

**STRONG BABY**

MESSAGES FROM THE MUMS OF THE FITZROY VALLEY



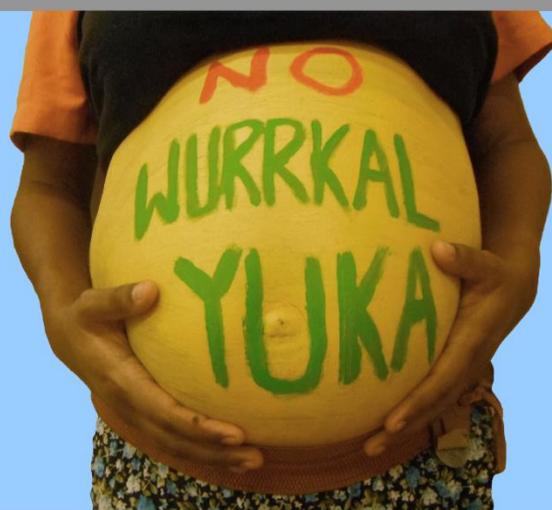
## Drugs

Can cause serious permanent damage to baby and baby may die inside (stillborn).

**Alcohol and Drug Support line (24 hrs)  
1800 198 024.**



# NO GUNJA, STRONG BABY



STRONG MIND

STRONG BODY

STRONG BABY

MESSAGES FROM THE MUMS OF THE FITZROY VALLEY

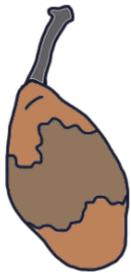


## 6 weeks

Baby is the size of a Gubinge, brain and spine are growing.

## 2 Months

Baby is the size of a Quandong and has eyes, nose, mouth, fingers and toes.



## 3 Months

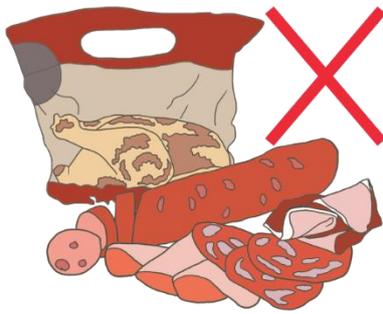
Baby is the size of a boab nut, arms and legs are starting to move, you won't feel movements yet.

*'When I was pregnant the men would go out together and hunt and get a killer to share with everyone, always was good tucker and everyone helped. We didn't eat emu, snake or catfish when pregnant as we thought baby may get real sick or skin sores'*

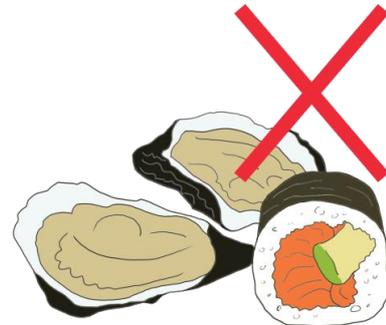
## Foods not to eat when pregnant

Infection (**LISTERIA**) are in some foods and if you get this infection when you are pregnant it can harm your baby.

### DO NOT EAT



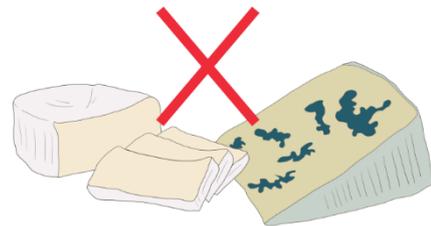
**Supermarket Hot Chicken,  
Ham & Salami**



**Uncooked Seafood**  
*\*Freshly caught seafood  
is ok, including oysters,  
fish and crabs*



**Soft Serve Ice cream**



**Soft Cheeses**

## Healthy food for you and baby

Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables.

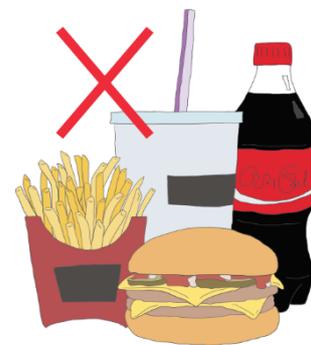
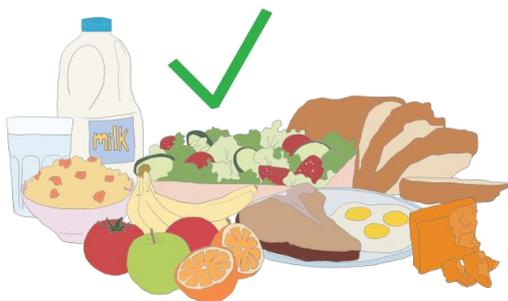
Cereals, wholegrain bread, pasta and rice.

Lean meat, chicken and fish.

Milk, yoghurt and cheese (hard cheeses).

Drink plenty of water.

*Don't drink tea with your meals - you get weak blood (low iron).*



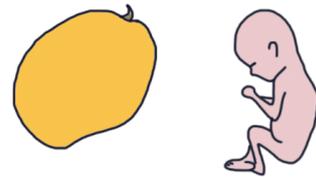
## Unhealthy eating

Takeaway food does not have enough vitamins and minerals that baby needs to grow healthy.



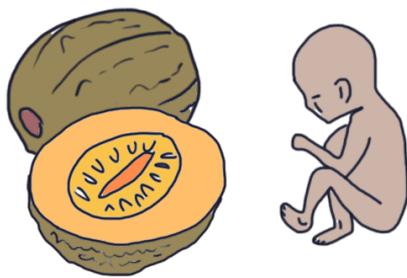
## 4 months

Baby is about 15cms the size of a mango, has fingernails and toenails and can suck his thumb.



## 5 months

Baby is about 25cms the size of a rockmelon, has hair, can touch, taste and smell. You may feel your baby move now.



## 6 months

Baby is now 30cms about the size of a sweet potato. Brain is still growing, heart and kidneys are working. Baby can see and hear.

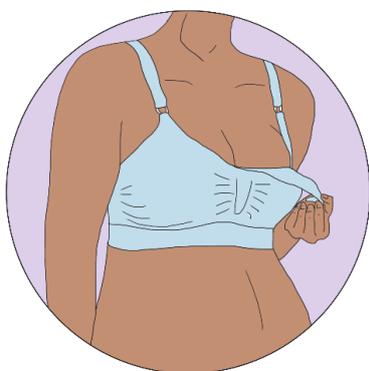
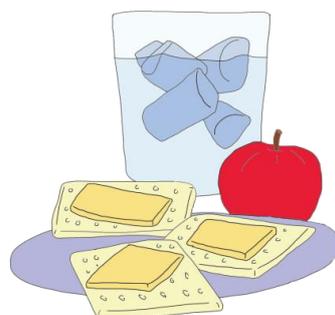


## Changes to your body in pregnancy.



### Feel sick, tired or cranky

Eat small healthy meals and don't eat greasy foods. Try a dry biscuit or toast before getting out of bed and get plenty of rest.



### Tender or sensitive breasts

As your breasts get bigger they can feel sore. Wear a supportive, comfortable bra.

### Going to toilet often

As baby grows you may wee more as baby presses on your bladder.



## Dry and Itchy skin

Rub moisturiser in to the skin, you may notice stretch marks on breasts and tummy.



## Constipation

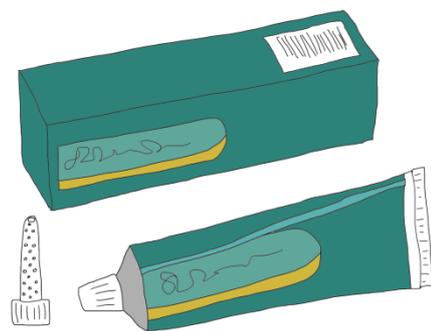
When it is difficult to go to the toilet. Exercise, drink water, fruit and vegetables every day.

Speak to clinic staff about medicine to help.

## Haemorrhoids

Can be caused by constipation when anus (back passage) becomes swollen and painful.

*See your clinic staff for some medicine to relieve the swelling and pain.*



## Tests in Pregnancy

### Ultrasound

First ultrasound is before 3 months, very important to check the size of baby and baby's due date.

Second ultrasound is at 5 months to check baby is growing well.

### Blood Tests

When you first see the midwife or clinic staff they will take many blood tubes to test for many different important tests. Staff will explain each one. If you have low iron or sex infection (STI) then sometimes you may need another blood test a few weeks later to recheck.



The sugar test and your iron is checked again at around 6-7 months with more blood tests.

A couple of weeks before baby is due you need some more blood tests.



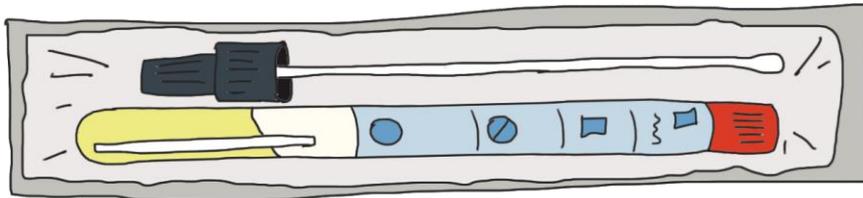
## The sugar test

This will take 2 hours to check sugar levels in your blood in case you have diabetes.

*Clinic staff will tell you to fast overnight (no drinks, food or smokes) and then they take a blood test. Then you will be given a sugary drink and more blood tests.*

## Vaginal Swabs

Taken near the baby bag to check for infection as this can cause serious problems for the baby.



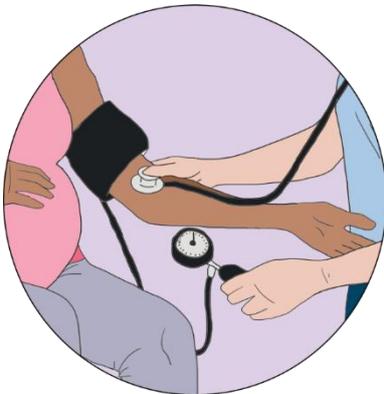
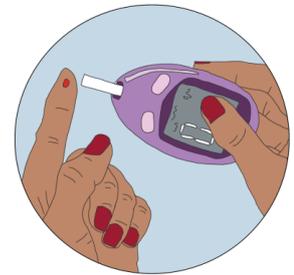
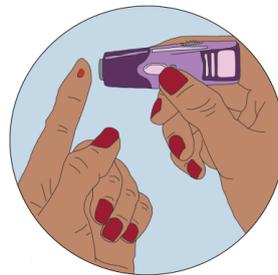
**Keep your own ultrasound  
image here**



## Problems in Pregnancy

### Too much sugar (Diabetes)

Can cause health problems for you and can make your baby grow too big or be stillborn.



### High blood pressure

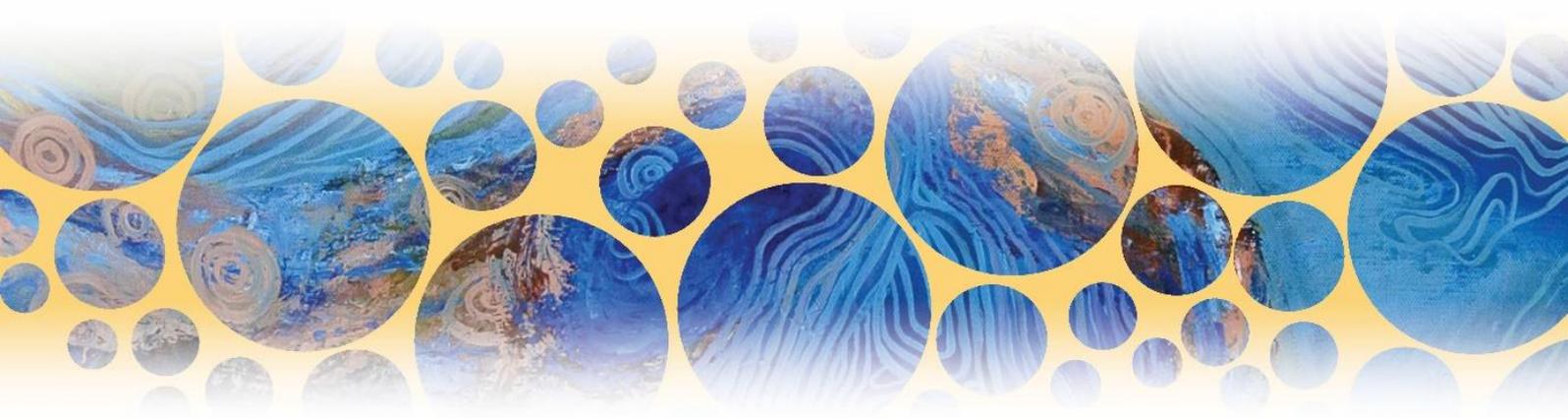
Can cause health problems for you and your baby could be born too early or too small.

### Gum and teeth infections

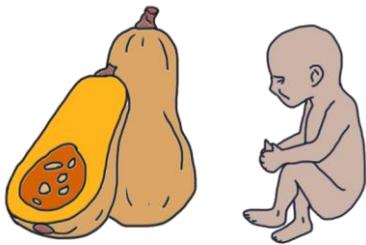
Can harm your baby.

*Have your teeth checked by the dentist.*





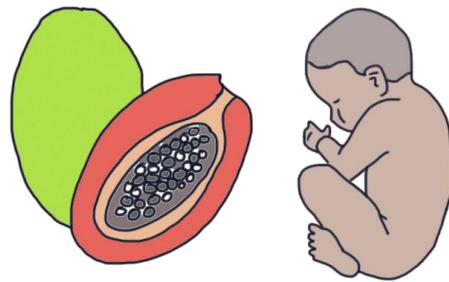
## 7 months



Baby is about the size of a small pumpkin, has lots of movement and can hiccup.

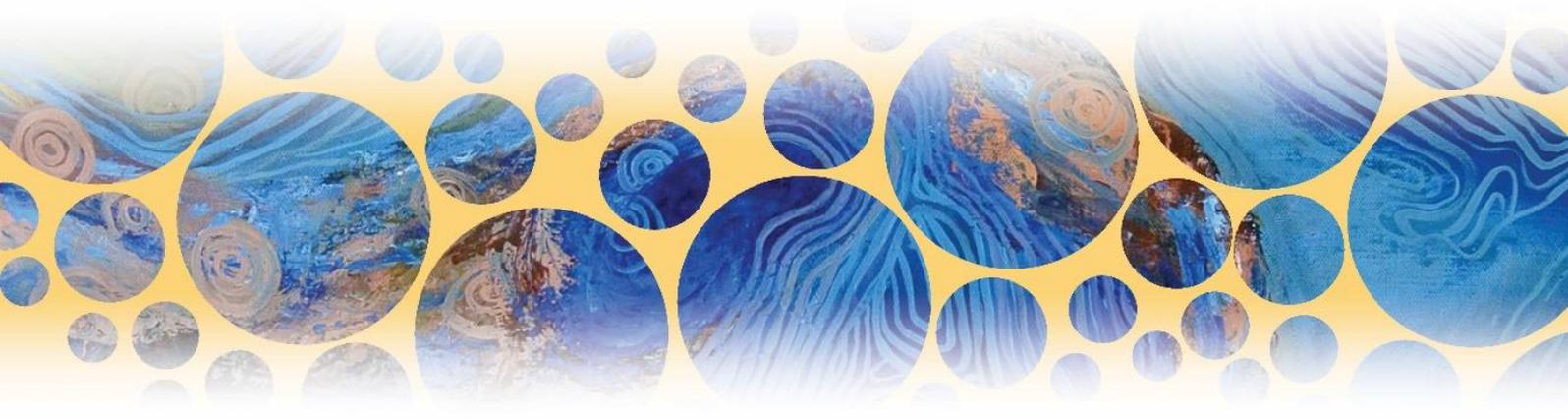
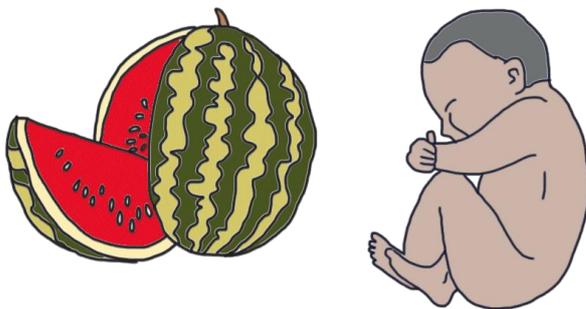
## 8 months

Baby is about the size of a Paw Paw, keeps eyes open while awake and can hear.



## 9 months

Baby is around the size of a watermelon and ready to be born soon.



## Getting ready for baby

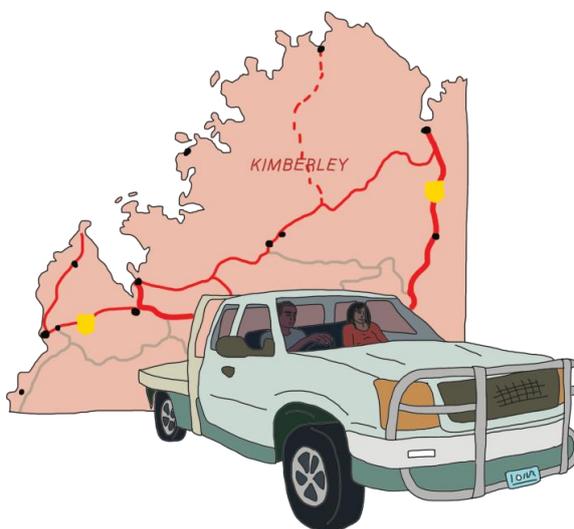


## If you live in a community

You need to go to the town where you will be having your baby at around 37 weeks.

Clinic staff will arrange transport and hospital appointments.

*Make sure you keep your phone charged, stay in contact with the clinic staff.*



## **Baby is coming**

Most babies are born at the right time, but some come too early.

## **Go straight to hospital**

If you are losing blood or fluid.

If you have strong pain in your tummy or back.

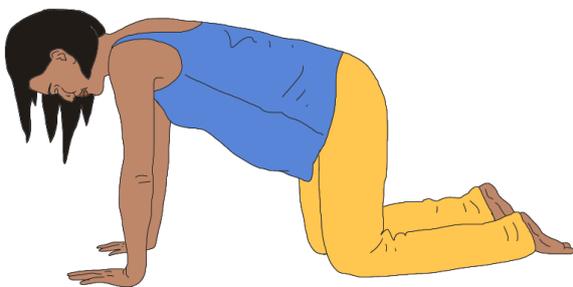
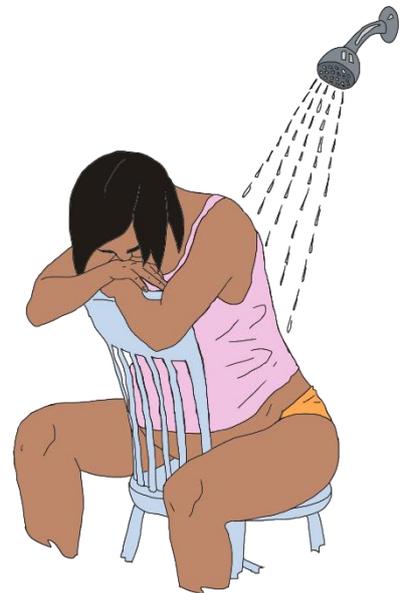
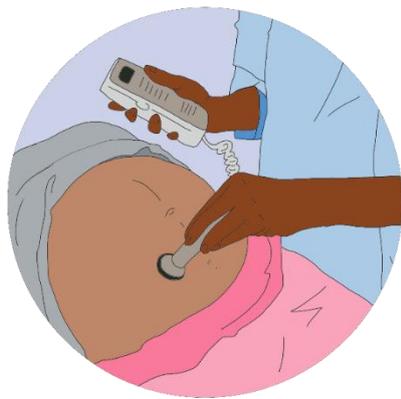
If you feel sick/unwell.

*Important to have someone you trust with you.*



Walk around, try massage, hot shower, or different positions.

Baby pains get stronger and closer together. It is important for the nurse to listen to the baby's heart during labour.



***'Sisters or grandmothers would collect wood and light a fire close to where baby will be born and burn Konkaberry branches and the smoke makes mother and baby strong.'***

Baby pains get stronger and closer together. You can have gas, needle in your leg or your back (epidural) to help with the pain.

*If you have too much pain don't be shame- tell your midwife.*



***'This was women's business; we would rub her back, hold her and take away any fear. If baby not coming out, a message would be sent to baby's father to loosen his belt or headband to help baby come out'***

## When time ready for baby to come out

You will feel you want to push and might feel cranky.

Try and relax between pains, baby will come soon, family & midwife can help.



## Afterbirth

Midwife may give you a needle to help afterbirth (placenta) come out.



As long as you and baby are well, it's good for baby to have an early breastfeed.

*If you would like to see or keep the placenta, ask the midwife.*

## **Baby operation (caesarean)**

Sometimes you need to have this to help baby to be born safely.

This might be planned or decided when you are in labour.

A needle will be put in your back (Epidural) so you don't feel any pain.

After birth you can hold and breastfeed if your baby is well.



## Breast feeding your baby

Breast milk is best for all babies.

Helps baby to stay healthy and reduce infections.

First few days your breasts make colostrum, a yellow thick milk to protect baby.

Your milk comes in 3 days after baby born.



*'Women make a bracelet from grandmas, mums and dads hair which they put round baby's wrist so they can tell baby is growing and helps stops baby from being sick'*

## **Breastfeeding problems**

**Milk may be slow to come in-** *keep breastfeeding as this makes more milk.*

**Swollen hard breasts-** *Massage lumps in shower, keep feeding and wear good supportive bra.*

**Sore cracked nipples-** *ask midwife for help to make sure baby is sucking properly.*

**Breast infection (Mastitis)** Red, hot and lumpy breasts, you may have a fever or feel sick.

***Very important to keep breast feeding your baby and you need to be checked at the clinic or hospital.***



***'After baby born the woman would sit near the smoke from the Konkerberry fire to help stop the bleeding, it makes them strong and helps make good breast milk'***

## Bottle feeding

Breastfeeding is the best way to feed your baby.

If a baby is not breastfed baby formula must be used.

## Making formula

Always wash your hands first.

Wash bottles & teats with hot soapy water after every feed.

Pour correct level of cool boiled water into a clean bottle first.

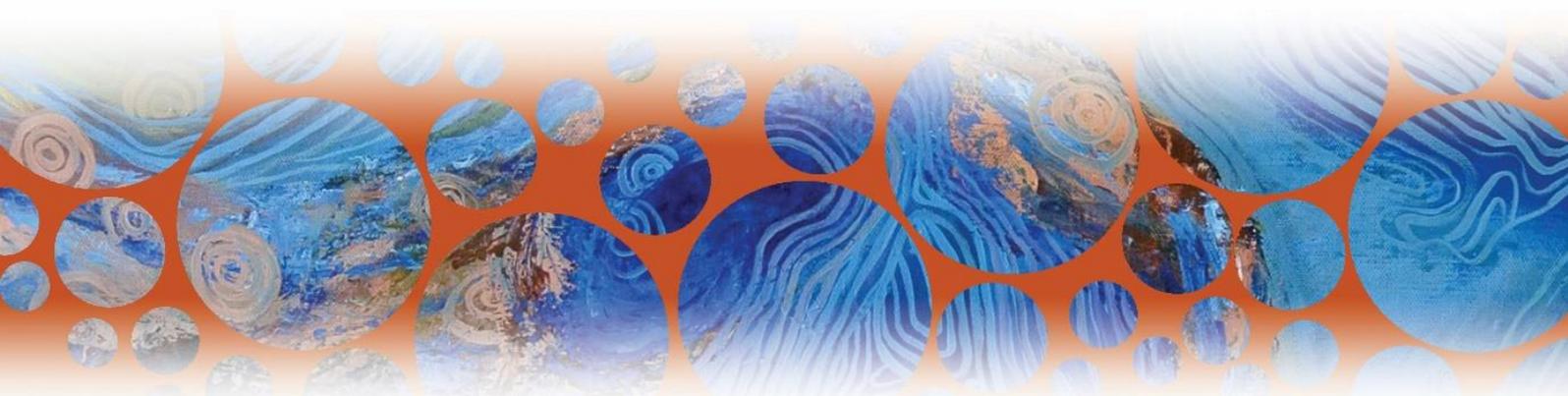
Add correct number of formula scoops by following the instructions on the tin.

*Too many scoops of formula or not enough will make baby sick.*

Ask your midwife or child health nurse for advice about the number of scoops as your baby grows.

*Throw away any milk baby does not finish and make a fresh bottle each feed.*





## Keep baby safe

### ***Reducing the Risk of SIDS---What is SIDS?***

***It's when a baby dies and we don't know the reason.***

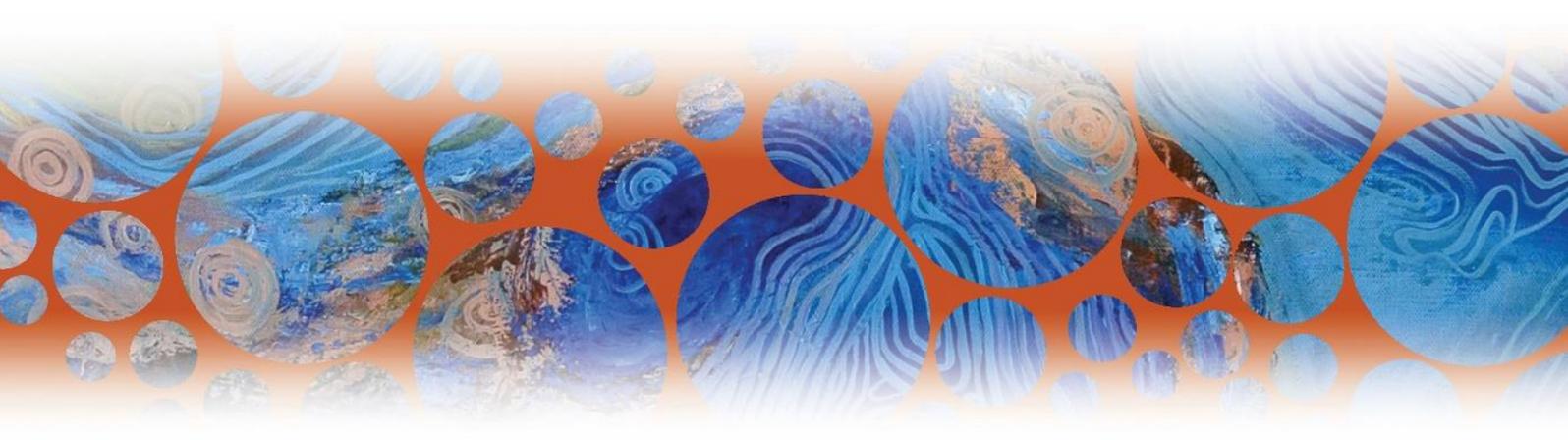
***No one is to Blame.***

**To reduce the risk of SIDS ...**

### **6 Important things to remember**

1. Breast feed your baby.
2. Put baby on his/her back to sleep from birth.
3. Sleep baby with his/her face uncovered.
4. Place baby on a firm and flat surface to sleep.
5. Provide a tobacco/gunga smoke free place for baby.
6. Provide a safe sleeping place for baby day and night.

***'Baby slept in a ngurdi bed (coolaman) which was rocked and the women scratched the coolaman underneath with their nails to settle baby and allow mum to rest. It also helped keep the baby's spine straight and keep them cool.'***



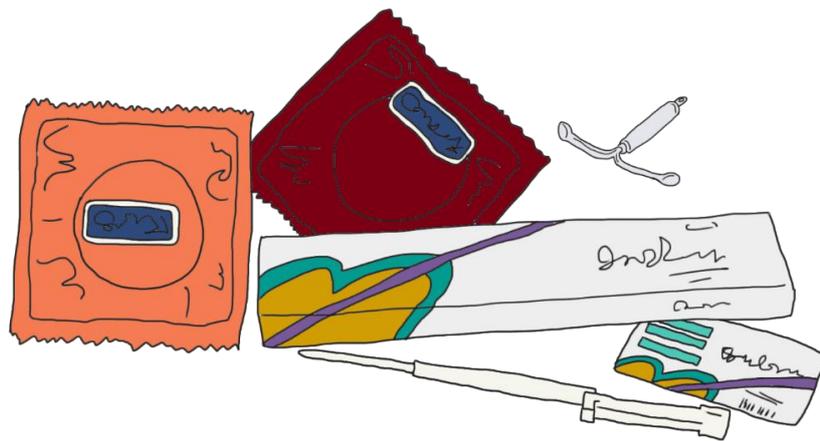
## Caring for yourself and baby

You may have some bleeding up to six weeks after baby is born.

You may feel sad a few days after baby is born, talk to someone you trust.

If you feel sad for a long time or cry a lot, talk to your midwife or clinic staff.

You can talk to your midwife at the hospital or clinic staff about contraception choices to stop you getting pregnant.





## Going home

If travelling by car you need to have a car seat fitted to keep baby safe. It is important to go to the Clinic when you return home so staff can meet your baby and check you are both well.

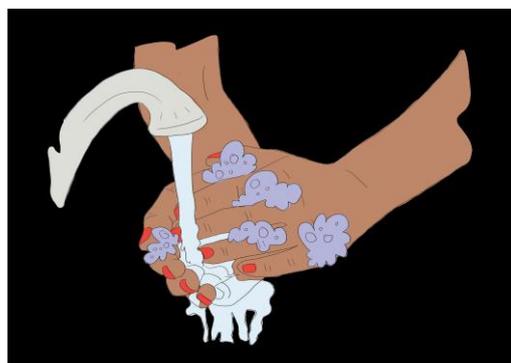


*'My Tjarinny (spirit) is a rainbow serpent and my daughters' spirit is a king brown, she has a mark on her arm where my partner threw the snake on the fire when I was pregnant'*

## Baby safety

Wash your hands after changing baby's nappy and after going to the toilet.

Cigarette smoke can harm your baby – do not smoke near your baby or in the car.



If you drink or take drugs let someone you trust look after your baby. Smoking Gunja can make you too sleepy and you may roll over onto baby.





Sleep baby on their back, keep blankets away from face, no pillows or soft toys near baby.

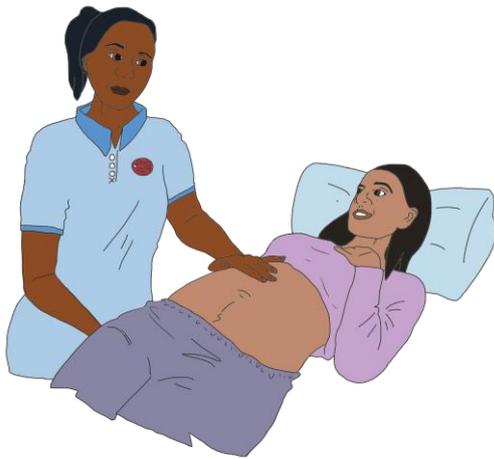
You may have a ceremony for your baby when you return home.



*'The smoke helps baby grow strong and healthy'*

**All new babies need to see a child health nurse in the first 2 weeks**

## Health check at clinic 6 – 8 Weeks



Mum and baby need a check-up with the midwife, Doctor and child health nurse.



Baby also has their first needles and needs to see the doctor to have a heart check. The hospital will give you this baby book, it tells you when you need to take baby to the clinic for a check-up.

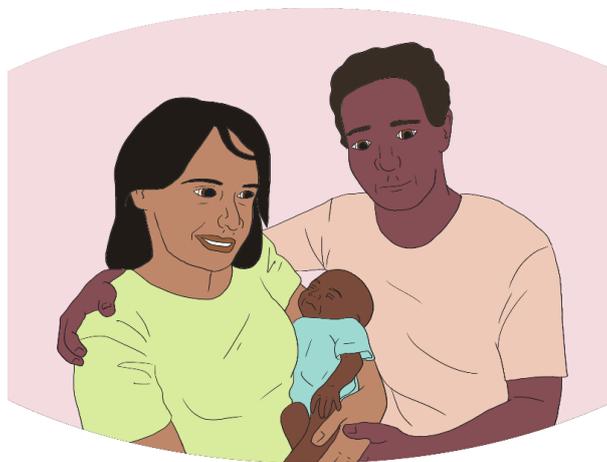


The Purple Book health checks are now at:



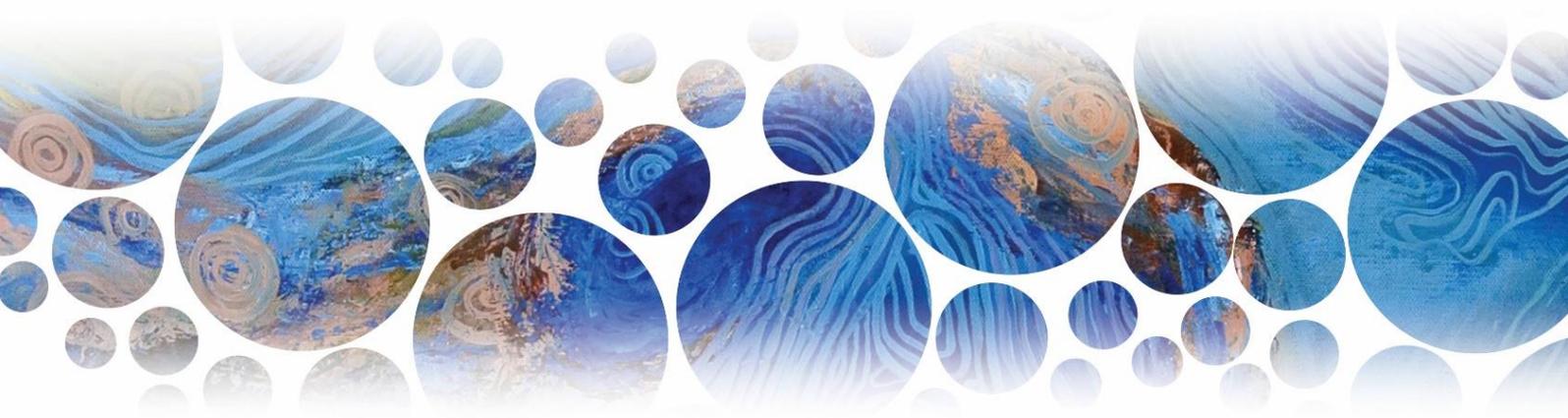
## Being parents

Talk to your partner about being parents, how you are feeling, and how you would like to grow up your baby to be strong and healthy.



Enjoy being a mother.





## **Contacts**

**Australian breastfeeding Association** 1800 686 268  
[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

**BeyondBlue** 1300 224 636  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

**Healthdirect Australia- 24hr health advice** 1800 022 222

**Lifeline** 13 11 14

**Ngala parenting helpline** 1800 111 546

**Women's domestic violence helpline** 1800 007 339

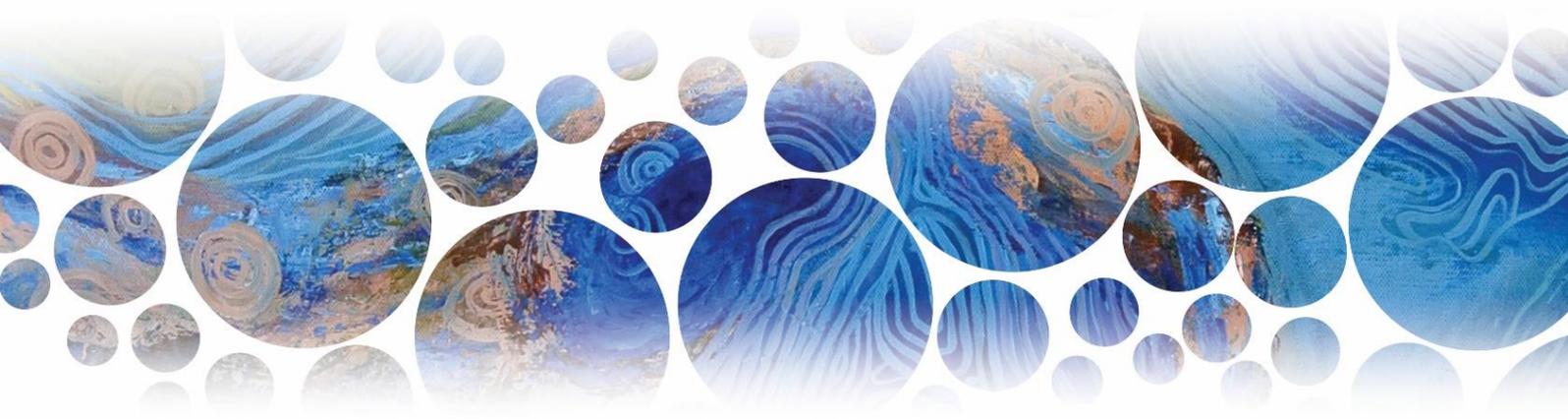
**Alcohol and Drug Service** 1800 250 015

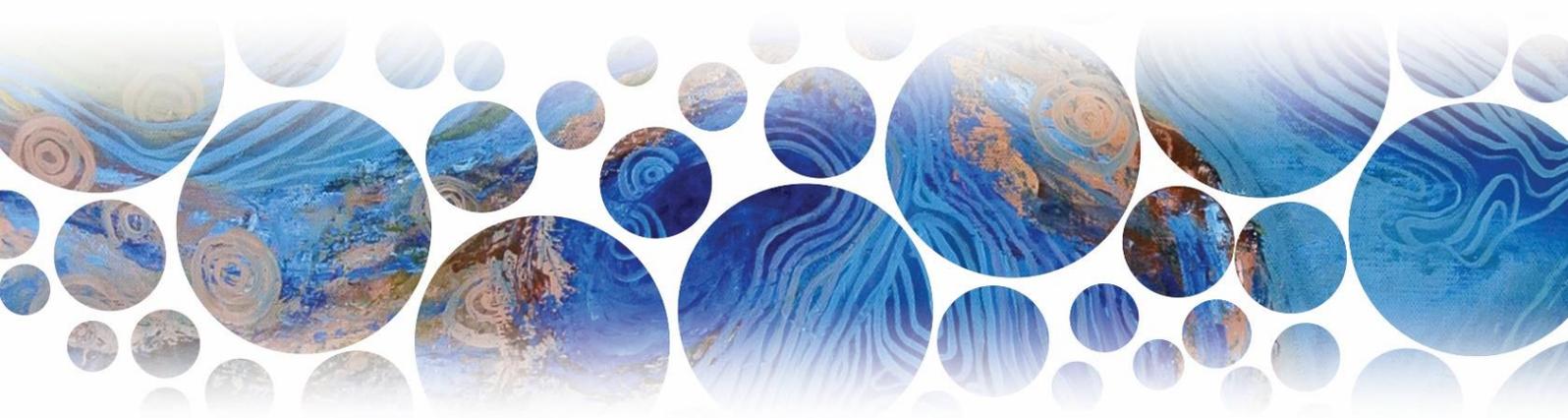
## **Kimberley Contacts**

**Anglicare WA** 1800 812 511

**Crisis care** 1800 199 008

**Write your own local supports here**





## Words you may need to know

**Amniotic fluid:** The liquid the baby floats in.

**Afterbirth:** When placenta comes out after baby.

**Amniotic sac:** Bag which holds baby and amniotic fluid.

**Birth Canal:** The vagina.

**Cervix:** At the top of the vagina and opens during labour.

**Epidural:** A fine tube in your back to help with the strong baby pains.

**FASD: Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder:** Babies may have this condition if mothers drink alcohol during pregnancy. Alcohol damages your baby's brain- which can last a lifetime and cause learning and behaviour problems.

**Miscarriage:** Death of baby before 20 weeks.

**Placenta:** Is attached to the uterus and provides baby with oxygen and food through the umbilical cord.

**Postnatal depression:** Feeling sad or anxious after birth for a long time.

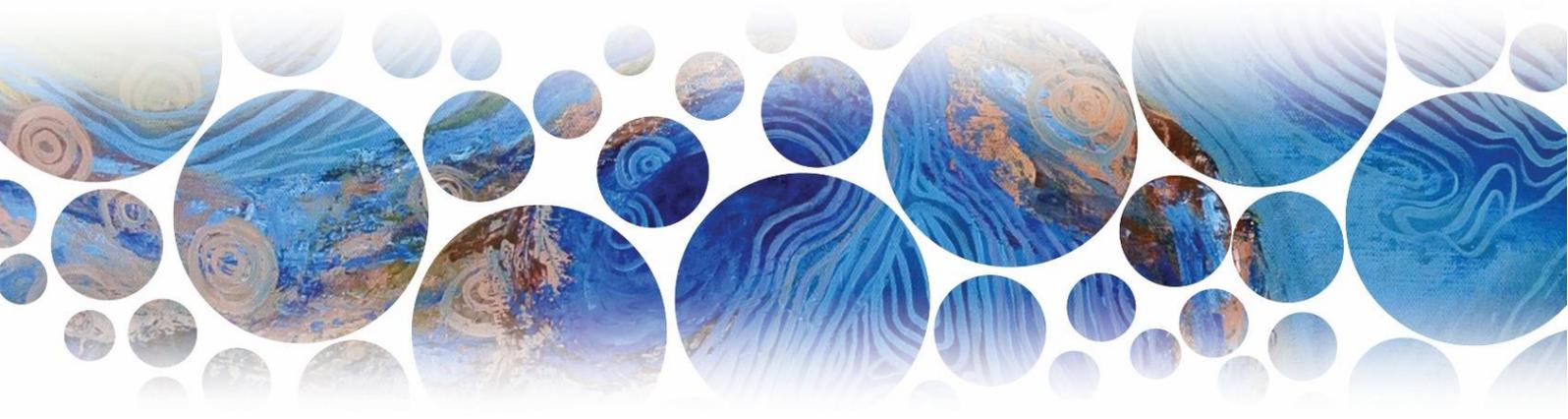
**Rupture of membranes:** When the baby bag breaks.

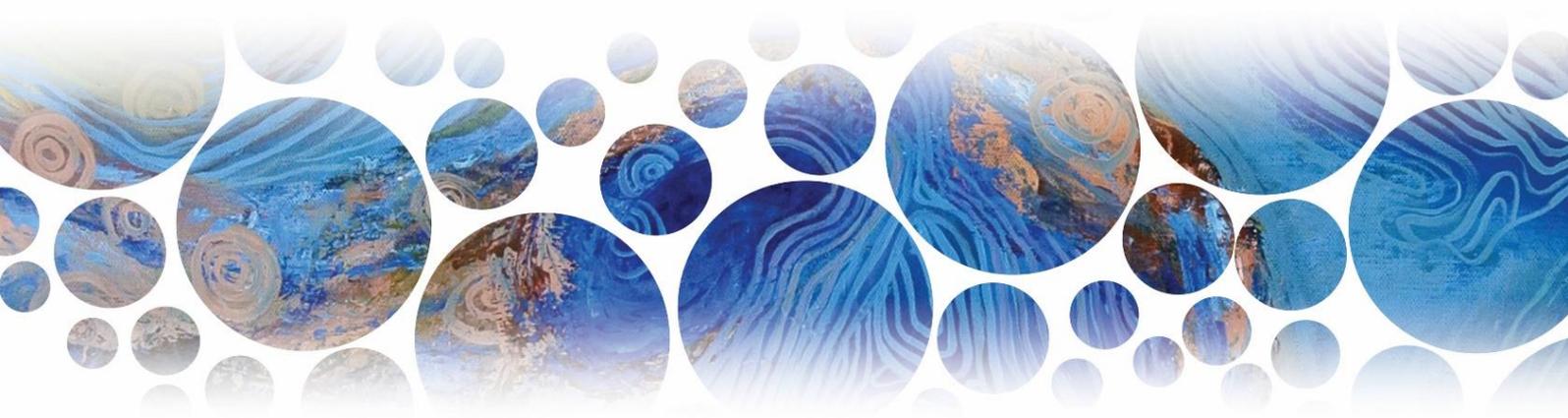
**Stillbirth:** Baby not born alive after 20 weeks.

**Umbilical cord:** Connects baby to placenta.

**Uterus:** Holds the baby bag, baby and placenta.

**Vaginal swab:** Taken from inside the vagina.





## Acknowledgements

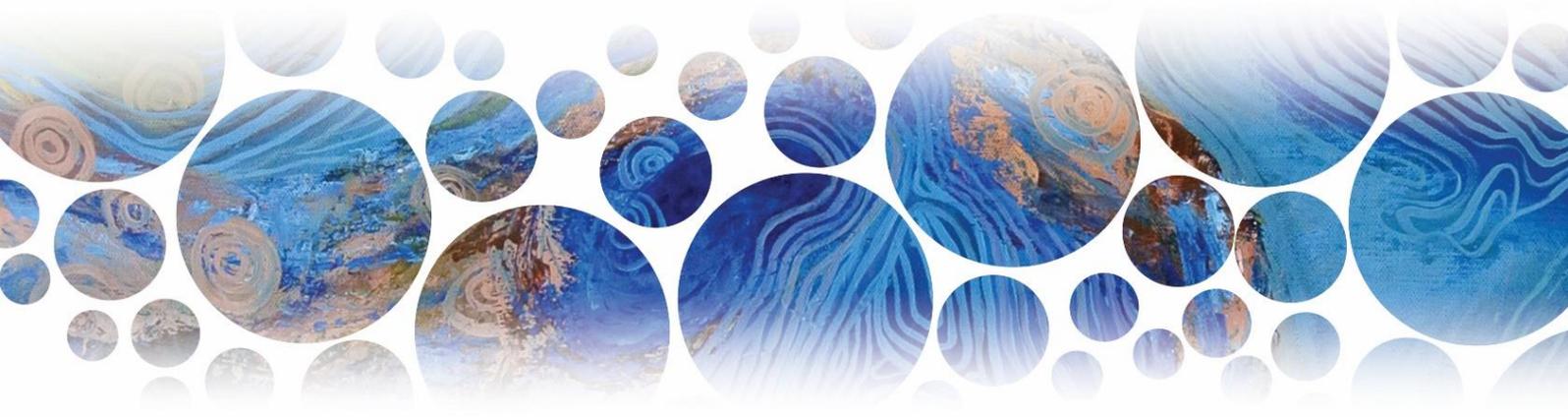
*This book has been developed following extensive consultation with local Indigenous women from rural and remote communities across the Kimberley. Midwives, Aboriginal Health Workers and clinic staff have contributed valuable knowledge and resources to enable this book to be created.*

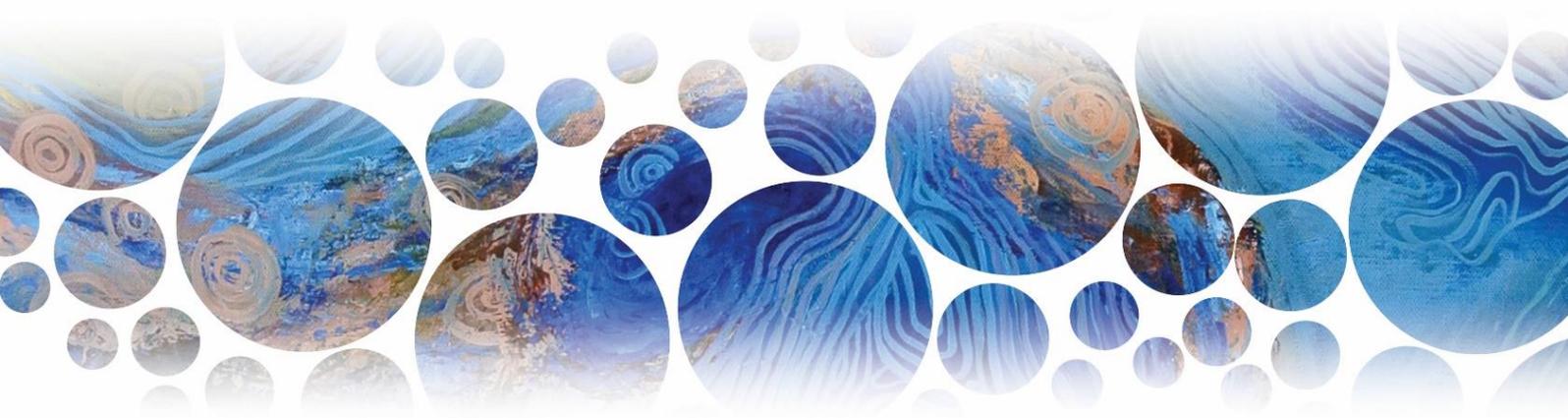
### ***Special Thanks to:***

**Kara Matters**, a Noongar woman from Albany for her hard work and dedication on the graphics throughout this book.

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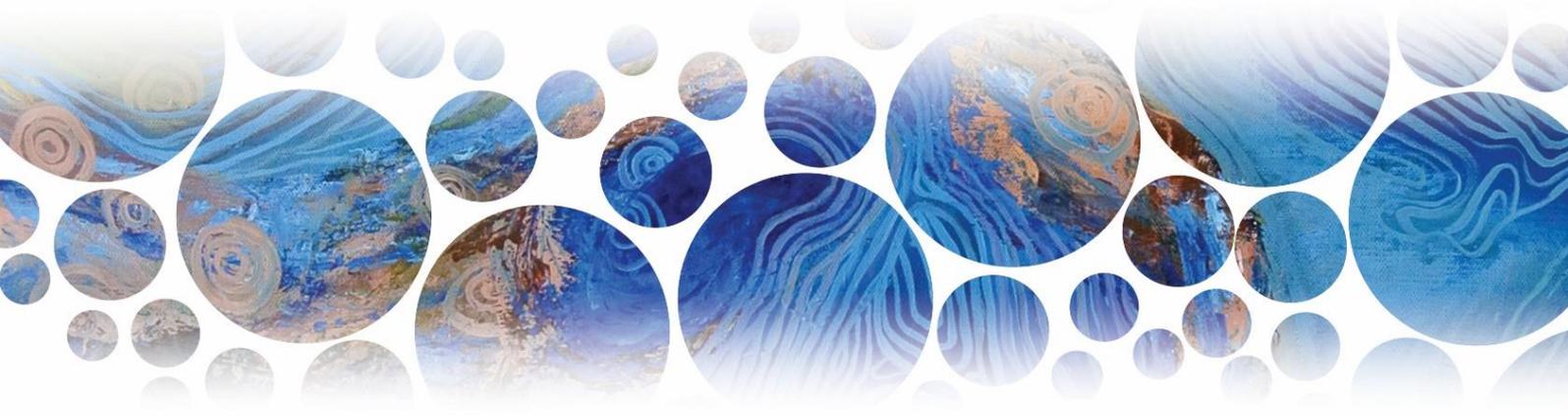


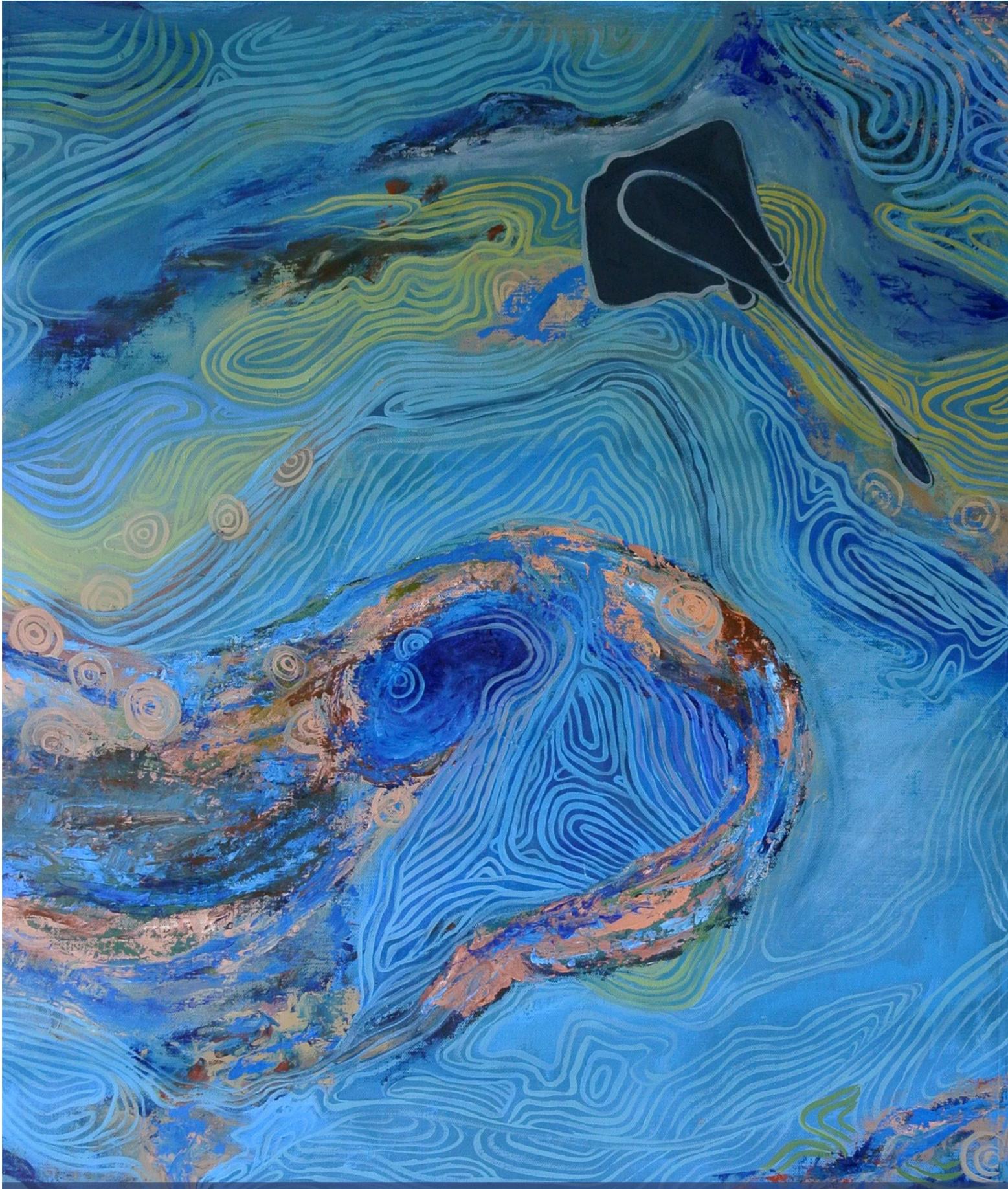


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