



beautify your bump

There's science involved everywhere, even when you choose what to wear when you're pregnant. Our experts share tips on choosing the best fabric and the most flattering fits for those months. by **RITIKA JAIN**

YOU MIGHT have seen Instagram pictures of celebrities like Kareena Kapoor flaunting their bumps in style, a glad new trend. Well, fashion embraces back every one who embraces it. Besides, you don't want to look back at your most cherished moments and wince at what you were wearing. Here is a trimester-by-trimester fashion guide for you.

➔ TRIMESTER I

Culturally, most women don't want to reveal their bumps in the first trimester. So clingy clothes and fabrics like lycra are out. In the initial months, go for silhouettes that camouflage the few extra kilos you've put on and fabrics that flow gracefully over the belly and hips. Tops with an elastic

waistband that lets the fabric fold over the tummy and A-line skirts are a good choice. Kurtas or tunics are popular because they fit well around the shoulders/arms and are loose around the stomach. Avoid low-rise jeans as they can make your tummy look like it's jutting out. Ideally, the pants should be about one inch below your belly button.

➔ TRIMESTER II

In the second trimester, you should invest in clothes that will grow with you. Flexible styles that involve ruching and gather in the right places can create an optical illusion making your waist look smaller. Also, tie-backs will give your growing tummy some room. Empire waist garments, peasant tops, maxi and wrap dresses look good around this time. Classic denim maternity jeans also works for all occasions. Pair these with a stylish poncho. Says Vanita Bhatnagar, who owns a boutique studio called Tann in Delhi, "I make harem pants with soft, stretchable materials like organic *mulmul* or hosiery. Pregnant women need breathing fabrics because they feel hot due to hormonal changes."

➔ TRIMESTER III

Flowing dresses in soft-knit fabrics prove to be most comfortable in the third trimester. Avoid horizontal stripes while picking patterns for a dress. Solid colours from top to bottom have a slimming effect. Wear V-necks or scooped necks that draw attention to the bust and cuts that are flattering around the hips, and keep styling around the midsection as basic as possible. Avoid stiff fabrics and layer up instead. An open button-down shirt in chambray or tartan worn with a vest can look sexy.

* Accessorizing: Less is More

Use accessories as a distraction technique. Adding hoops, a simple neck piece or a scarf with bold patterns will accentuate the neck or shoulder area and take the attention away from the belly. But usually one statement piece is enough. Don't overdo it. While belts aren't necessary for most people, they can be worn over or under the bump if required.

* High Heels: A Complete No-no

They encourage fluid retention in your legs and feet, and place extra stress on your back. Buy relaxed footwear with a low heel and firm grip. Sneakers with cushioned insoles and laces are the best bet for swollen feet. You'll find some really smart ones at Skechers, H&M, Quicksilver and Promod. Consider ballet-style flats while going out.

"Any maternity wear that you buy should just tick the 'versatile' and 'comfortable' boxes. Wearing maternity clothes with feeding accesses are highly recommended during pregnancy. After delivering your little one, hidden zippers, front buttons, and discrete nursing openings can help you transition

effortlessly from pregnancy to motherhood. Most importantly, nothing is more fashionable than confidence. Be proud of yourself. You're creating life and it's not an easy feat. So own your confidence and you'll look like a diva no matter what you wear", says Kriti Baveja, co-founder of *MomzJoy.com*

➔ smart moves

Here are easy-to-follow, handy tips that will help you breeze through those nine months.

- You can buy bra extenders from online stores like *amazon.in* till the time you actually change to a bigger cup size or you need a nursing bra.
- Avoid polyesters. Wrinkle-free fabrics mean they've been treated with some chemicals.
- You'll be using the restroom a lot, so avoid complicated styles that can't be unfastened in a hurry. Yoga pants are the best.
- In case of varicose veins, wearing compression stockings can help improve your blood circulation.
- You can get creative with your existing wardrobe. Wear that skirt with an elastic waistband as an off-shoulder top.
- Bring out your designer bags and use them now, before the diaper bag takes over.
- Go sulphate-free with your shampoos and conditioners. Opt for chemical-free nail colours. You can also ditch make-up removers by using olive oil. Raid your kitchen to make mashed avocado facial masks, banana hair masks and potato eye masks.
- A handy hair claw can come to your rescue, especially on a hot day. All you should do is sweep up your mane and make a bun.