**Prenatal Development and the Newborn**

**Genetics**

At 8 weeks after conception, babies are anatomically indistinguishable until around the 4th or 5th month. A childs sex is determined by the 23rd pair of chromosomes. Two Xs indicate a female while an X and a Y indicate a male. The Y chromosome can only come the father as the mother has only Xs. The Y chromosome stimulates the development of the male sex organ by producing **testosterone**. This is the most important male sex hormone but females have testosterone as well. The term **Gender**refers to biologically or socially influenced characteristics which people define as male/female.

**The following terms are associated with prenatal development:**

**Zygote**: the fertilized egg; less than half survive pass 2 weeks. After 10 days, zygote attach to mothers uterine wall and forms placenta for nourishment.

**Embryo**: the developing human from 2 weeks to second month.

**Fetus**: the developing human from 2 months to birth.

* The fetus hears muffled version of mothers voice and prefers it after birth
* **Teratogens**: agents that can the harm the embryo or the fetus during the prenatal stage. For example, a mother who is a heroin addict will have a heroin addicted baby. **FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome)** affects 1 in 750 infants and occurs when a mothers alcohol intake has caused brain abnormalities.

**The Newborn**

Newborns are equipped with reflexes ideal to survival. The newborn **Rooting reflex**is the reflex that when the baby is touched on cheek he opens the mouth to find the nipple.

Perceptual abilities continue to develop during first month and the child can distinguish its mothers odor.