

CHAPTER 15	Critical Phases of Prenatal Development	BLM 15.2.2
OVERHEAD		

Severe congenital abnormalities						Less severe abnormalities and functional disorders			
Embryonic period (weeks)						Fetal period (weeks)			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	16	32	38
abnormalities of the neural tube								CNS abnormalities	
	heart abnormalities		heart abnormalities						
	abnormalities of the extremities		upper extremities						
	abnormalities of the extremities		lower extremities						
	cleft lip		upper lip						
	abnormalities of the ears (lower ear location, hearing impairment)						ears		
	eye disorders (abnormally small eyes, glaucoma, cataracts)				eyes				
					tooth enamel, discoloration		teeth		
					cleft palate		gums		
					genital abnormalities		external sex organs		

Legend:

- highly sensitive phase
- less sensitive phase

This graph shows the critical phases of prenatal development. The darker portions correspond to periods when organs are most sensitive to teratogens.