



My Heart Starts Beating at 16 Days

"A baby's first heartbeat happens as early as 16 days after conception, a new study has discovered.

Until now, researchers thought that the first time our heart muscle contracted to beat was at 8 days after conception in mice which equates to around day 21 of a human pregnancy.

Now, a team funded by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) at the University of Oxford have found it is far earlier.

They have demonstrated earlier beating of the heart in mouse embryos which, if extrapolated to the human heart, suggests beating as early as 16 days after conception.

In the study, published in the scientific journal *eLife*, researchers studied the developing mouse heart and found that the muscle started to contract as soon as it formed the cardiac crescent – an early stage in heart development.

In mice, this crescent forms 7.5 days after conception, which is equivalent to day 16 in the human embryo."

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3833015/>

get the facts.

ABORTION IN IOWA: In its landmark 1973 abortion cases, *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that an abortion is not absolute, and states may restrict or ban abortions after fetal viability, provided that their policies meet certain requirements. In these and subsequent decisions, the court has held that:

- even after fetal viability, states may not prohibit abortions “necessary to preserve the life or health” of the woman
- only the physician, in the course of evaluating the specific circumstances of an individual case, can define what constitutes “health”
- “health” in this context includes physical and mental health; a fetus is viable; and states may not require additional physicians to confirm the attending physician’s judgment that the woman’s life or health is at risk in cases of medical emergency.

IOWA LAW: In Iowa, there is a life and health of the mother exception on abortion in the 3rd trimester LMP (last menstrual period). Health, in this context, includes physical and mental health, and the physician defines what constitutes as health. In Iowa, an additional physician’s judgment is not necessary.

To read more about Iowa’s abortion laws, visit:

iowartl.org/get-the-facts/legislation/iowa-law/

Citation: *State Policies on Later Abortions*.
Washington, D.C.: Guttmacher Institute, 2016. PDF