

## Twelve Prenatal Senses, Not Five\*

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During most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, scientists doubted the presence of functioning senses during fetal life. Touch, they said, was merely “reflexive”; hearing was severely “dampened” (if not drowned) in the liquid environment of the womb; vision was primitive at best, first blocked by closed eyelids, and then distorted under water; and the sense of smell was judged “impossible” without air. By the end of the century, experts were reaching for a consensus that there could be touch, hearing, and tasting in utero. However, considering the immaturity of the brain, skepticism remained about how any sensory information could be given any real meaning. I was in a small minority who found evidence for five senses operating meaningfully by birth (1988).

Today, a few authorities are declaring that the idea of “five” human senses--an idea dating from the Renaissance--is a dubious oversimplification. The correct number, some suggest, is between 5 and 17 (e.g., Rivlin & Gravelle, 1984). With that encouragement, I have taken another look at the wide range of prenatal research, including clinical data from my own clients, and I can now point to at least **twelve** senses *in utero*. In brief, this is my list of twelve.

- (1) Touch (receiving touch, and reaching out to touch) is the first sense to develop.
- (2) Thermal sensing of hot and cold is indeed real, but usually ignored
- (3) Pain sensing (now termed nociception) involves crushing and nerve damage. The reality of pain was tragically overlooked in creating the protocols of modern obstetrics.
- (4) Hearing begins as early as 14 weeks after conception, then improves greatly in ten weeks with cochlear resources and full growth of the external ear.
- (5) Balance, gravity, and orientation in space develops from week 7 to 12.
- (6) The chemosensors of smell operate in close association with the chemosensors of
- (7) taste as both are bathed by amniotic fluids passing through the nasal area.
- (8) “Mouthing” is used to explore texture, hardness, and contours of objects; this sense is not about food and eating.
- (9) Sucking and licking in the womb are mouth-related pleasure senses. The sucking of fingers and toes is not nutritive. Male thumb sucking, seen as early as 13 weeks, is often paired with erections, suggesting sexual sensations. Ultrasound reveals prenatals licking the placenta and twins licking each other, suggesting pleasure in bodily contact.
- (10) Vision in utero is paradoxical because *limited* by eyelids being fused shut for about six months, yet it seems *functional* in hitting targets like needles during amniocentesis at 14 to 16 weeks of age. Some form of vision seems to facilitate twins boxing, kicking, kissing, and playing together in the womb.
- (11) Although prenatals have never been acknowledged for their psychic gifts, they do demonstrate clairvoyance and telepathic sensing of things clearly out of reach; womb babies know whether they are wanted or not, and discern the character of their parents.
- (12) Finally, prenatals also demonstrate transcendent sensing during near-death and out-of-body experiences. When out-of-body, *no* senses should work for either babies or

adults, but they do. In transcendent states, even immature senses function well and events are stored in memory--as can be demonstrated years later. Contrary to popular belief, babies in the womb are richly equipped for sensing!

\*From: Communicating with the Mind of a Prenate, JOPPPAH 18(2), 95-108 (2003)