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Subject: Re: Duration of Pregnancy

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Thu, 23 May 2024 12:38:26 GMT

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Following is a response from Senior DHS Staff members, Tom Pullum and Trevor Croft:

b20 is a recode of b21. b21 is one of many three-digit DHS variables that are coded as a combination of units (the first digit) and number (the next two digits). The first digit is 1 for weeks and 2 for months. To see how b20 is constructed as a recode of b21, I recommend that you open the BR file and enter "tab b21, summarize(b20)". You will get a list showing the correspondence between b20, which is interpreted as completed months, and b21, which can be either weeks or months.

Thus, b21 is in weeks or months, and it is converted to b20, in months. If you want completed weeks, you will have some slippage--that is, some ambiguity. The way we measure time could be a boring topic for some people, but for demographers it is both fascinating and a nightmare. A month has an average of  $365.25/12 = 30.4375$  days. A week has 7 days, so there are  $30.4375/7 = 4.35$  weeks in a month. Unfortunately, 4.35 is not 4. If you look at the results of "tab b21, summarize(b20)", or "tab p21, summarize(p20)" in the NR file, you will see that months 7 and 8 have 4 weeks, but month 9 has 5 weeks, because 4.35 is not 4.

You could estimate the number of weeks with the following lines:

```
tab b21, summarize(b20)
gen  unit=2 if b21<.
replace unit=1 if b21<200
gen  number=b21-200 if unit==2
replace number=b21-100 if unit==1
gen  weeks=int(4.35*number) if unit==2
replace weeks=number      if unit==1
tab b21, summarize(weeks)
```

In place of 4.35 you can use 365.25/84. Hope this construction is clear and hope it helps.