General changes in airway in pregnancy

- Anatomic and physiologic changes in pregnancy place parturient patients at a greater risk for airway related complications.
- Early in pregnancy, increasing hormone levels have a major role in the anatomic and physiologic changes of pregnancy.
- As pregnancy progresses, the gravid uterus has a significant role in the alterations of respiratory, cardiovascular-system, and gastrointestinal functions.

(i) Weight gain
(ii) Upper airway mucosal edema
(iii) Respiratory changes with lower FRC and increased oxygen requirements leading to decreased respiratory reserve
(iv) Breast enlargement
(v) Cardiovascular-system changes
(vi) Gastrointestinal anatomy and physiology

- Other risk factors for difficult intubation in pregnancy:
  (i) Patients with preeclampsia have narrower upper airways than do normal pregnant women because of significant tissue edema and soft tissue deposition in the neck
  (ii) Morbid obesity