

# Parthenogenesis

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## Why in news?

The New England Aquarium in the United States recently announced that during the winter a “virgin” anaconda was born. There is no male anaconda in the aquarium. Anna, an anaconda green lady, bore some twins, two of whom survived. This is known as parthenogenesis in scientific terminology.

## What is this?

- Parthenogenesis is derived from the Greek words for “virgin birth”.
- It is an **asexual reproductive technique** involving the creation of a female (rarely male) gamete (a mature germ cell which can be mixed in sexual reproduction without fertilization with another of the opposite sex).
- Parthenogenesis frequently occurs in Lower plants and invertebrates (especially revolving animals, pheasants, ants, wasps and bees) and rarely seen among high vertebrates.
- The mother’s clones are babies born by parthenogenesis.
- The New England Aquarium has demonstrated this by means of DNA testing.
- Parthenogenetic offspring tend to be parent clones because genetic information has not been exchanged and re-arranged with another person, as in the case of sexual reproduction.
- In parthenogenesis, **stillbirth is common**.