

# PREECLAMPSIA AND PREGNANCY

Preeclampsia is a serious blood pressure disorder that can happen during pregnancy or soon after childbirth. Preeclampsia is a leading cause of death worldwide for women, fetuses and newborns. It can develop without you realizing it, so it's important to learn the symptoms.

## WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

When there are symptoms, they may include . . .

- A headache that will not go away
- Seeing spots, blurry vision or other changes in eyesight
- Swelling of face or hands
- Sudden weight gain
- Nausea and vomiting in the second half of pregnancy
- Pain in the upper abdomen or shoulder
- Shortness of breath

## YOUR FUTURE HEALTH

If you are diagnosed with preeclampsia during pregnancy, **you may be more likely to have health problems in the future when you are not pregnant.**

These problems may include . . .

- Heart Attack
- Kidney Disease
- Stroke
- High Blood Pressure

**You may need to see your obstetrician-gynecologist (ob-gyn) or other health care professional earlier or more often** after childbirth so he or she can keep a close eye on your health. You should also tell any future health care professional that you had preeclampsia.

## REMEMBER

Many women who get preeclampsia do not have clear risk factors. **Talk with your ob-gyn or other health care professional right away if you have any warning signs.**

## WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

Anyone can develop preeclampsia. Many women who get preeclampsia are otherwise healthy and do not have clear risk factors. But some women may have a higher risk than others.



### Risk factors for women at high risk include . . .

- Preeclampsia in a past pregnancy
- Carrying more than one fetus
- Chronic high blood pressure
- Kidney disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Autoimmune conditions, such as lupus

### Risk factors for women at moderate risk include . . .

- Being pregnant for the first time
- Obesity
- Family history of preeclampsia (mother or sister)
- Being older than 35