

Preeclampsia: Your Warning Signs Guide

Maternal & Newborn · High-Risk Pregnancy (Preeclampsia, GDM)

Preeclampsia is high blood pressure in pregnancy, after 20 weeks, that harms organs such as the kidneys, liver, and brain. It can also start up to 6 weeks after birth.

Check your blood pressure

- Check it at home if your care team advises. Use an upper-arm cuff that fits.
- Rest 5 minutes. Sit with your back supported, feet flat, and arm at heart level.
- Write down every reading.

Know your numbers

- **Top number 140 or higher, or bottom number 90 or higher: call your provider today.**
- **Top number 160 or higher, or bottom number 110 or higher: go to the hospital now.**
- Your care team's numbers, if different: _____.

Take aspirin only if prescribed

- Low-dose aspirin (81 mg) lowers the risk of preeclampsia for some people.
- If prescribed, take it every day until your baby is born. Do not start it on your own.

Go to labor and delivery or the emergency room now if you have

- A severe headache that medicine does not help
- Spots in your vision or blurry vision
- Pain under your right ribs or in your upper belly

- Sudden swelling of your face or hands
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting late in pregnancy

After your baby is born

- Watch for these signs for 6 weeks. Tell the emergency team you recently had a baby.
- Keep your blood pressure visit, usually within 7 to 10 days.
- Take blood pressure medicine as prescribed.

Call your provider today if you have

- A top number of 140 or higher, or a bottom number of 90 or higher
- Swelling of your face or hands without other signs
- Your baby moving less than usual: go to labor and delivery now

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- A seizure (shaking fit)
- Chest pain or trouble breathing
- Confusion or passing out

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/preeclampsia-warning-signs/patient

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