

## Complications

**If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, contact your healthcare providers or HealthLine (811) for support and information.**

### **Are you vomiting or nauseous?**

It is normal to feel sick and vomit during pregnancy. If you haven't been able to eat or drink in the last 12 hours, contact your healthcare providers. There is medication that can help control severe vomiting during pregnancy.

### **Are your chronic disease symptoms getting worse?**

Many chronic diseases, like diabetes, epilepsy, and asthma, can get worse during pregnancy. If you can't control your symptoms with your medication, call your healthcare providers. You can find more information about chronic diseases and pregnancy in the section Ongoing Healthcare.

### **Do you have a fever?**

Fevers are signs of infections. Infections during pregnancy can affect the way your baby grows and develops. If you are experiencing a fever, talk to your healthcare provider.

### **Are you bleeding?**

It is normal to have spotting during pregnancy. Heavy bleeding might be a symptom of a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

A miscarriage means that the baby has died inside of you. You will still need to deliver the baby or you can get very sick. See your healthcare providers right away.

An ectopic pregnancy happens when a fertilized egg implants outside of the uterus. The fetus cannot survive. A symptom of an ectopic pregnancy is sharp pain in your lower stomach. This condition can lead to death, so it is important to seek medical care as soon as possible.

Heavy bleeding might also be a symptom of:

- abruptio placenta
- cervical incompetence
- placenta previa
- premature labour

Abruptio placenta usually happens after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. Abruptio placenta happens when the placenta separates from the wall of the uterus too early. It can cause bleeding. Your baby may have problems getting enough oxygen and nutrients needed to grow. Abruptio placenta can cause problems during labour and can result in death for the baby.

Cervical incompetence happens when your cervix starts opening before your 9<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy. This can cause premature birth or miscarriage.

Placenta previa is about the placement of the placenta in the uterus. Usually, the placenta attaches to the top part of the uterus. When it attaches to the bottom of the uterus, it is called placenta previa. This can cause the placenta to cover the birth canal. It can also cause bleeding and complications during labour. Placenta previa can cause the mother to die.

Premature labour is labour that starts before your 37<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.

## What are the signs of premature labour?

If labour starts before your 37<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy, you may show these symptoms:

- Contractions
- Vaginal pressure
- Frequent urination
- Diarrhea
- Tightness in lower stomach



## Do you have protein in urine (pee), swelling in feet or hands, vision problems, high blood pressure, and headaches?

Protein in urine, swelling in the feet or hands, vision problems, high blood pressure, and headaches can be symptoms of pre-eclampsia. Some

swelling of the feet and hands is normal during pregnancy. If it does not decrease or if it becomes uncomfortable, this can be a concern. Pre-eclampsia is a complication that usually occurs after the 20<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. If you smoke and get pre-eclampsia, you can have more complications than if you don't smoke. If left untreated, pre-eclampsia can be very dangerous for you and your baby.

## Do you have vaginal discharge and itchiness?

Some vaginal discharge is normal during pregnancy. Heavy discharge and itching may be a sign of an infection. Ask your healthcare providers to test you for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Many of these infections can be treated during pregnancy. If left untreated, some sexually transmitted infections can be harmful to your baby.

Vaginal discharge might also be a sign of cervical incompetence. This happens when your cervix starts opening before your 9<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy.

Heavy discharge can be a sign of premature labour.

If your discharge is clear and a lot of liquid is coming out, your amniotic sac's membranes may have broken early. This is also known as your water breaking. This should not happen until you are in labour. If it happens early, it is called Preterm Premature Rupture of Membranes (PPROM). It can cause infections that can hurt both you and your baby. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, this is an emergency, and you should see your doctor right away.

