Complications

Possible Pregnancy Complications, what to look for and how to help relieve them

**Preeclampsia**

Preeclampsia is a serious pregnancy complication that typically occurs after 20 weeks of gestation. It affects both the mother and the baby. Preeclampsia is a condition marked by high blood pressure and high protein levels in a woman’s urine. It can develop earlier in the pregnancy, or even postpartum.

Symptoms

High Blood Pressure, Changes in body functions, Severe headaches, vision changes, shortness of breath, upper belly pain (usually on the right side under the ribs), and nausea or vomiting, Sudden Weight Gain or Edema

Treatment:

Diet: Focus on calcium-rich foods, vitamin C and E sources, and avoid processed foods with refined sugars.

Lifestyle Measures: Adequate rest, hydration, reduce stress and avoiding alcohol and caffeine.

Contributing factors

Existing conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney disease, and systemic lupus erythematosus.

Obesity, 35 years of age or older, Carrying two or more fetuses or Preeclampsia in a previous pregnancy.

**Gestational diabetes**

When a woman who didn’t have diabetes before pregnancy develops the condition during pregnancy.

Contributing factors:

Being overweight or obese, Sedentary lifestyle, Black, Hispanic, American Indian and Asian American

Family member with diabetes, Previous pregnancy with gestational diabetes, Polycystic ovary syndrome

Prevention

Start pregnancy at a healthy weight and don't gain more weight than recommended by your doctor.

Eat healthy foods, make lasting changes to your eating habits to help you through pregnancy, and after baby is born.

Keep active - Take a brisk daily walk. Ride your bike. Swim laps. Short bursts of activity all add up.

**Baby blues symptoms**

Most new moms experience postpartum "baby blues" after childbirth, which commonly include mood swings, crying spells, anxiety and difficulty sleeping. Baby blues usually begin within the first 2 to 3 days after delivery and may last for up to two weeks.

Symptoms of baby blues — which last only a few days to a week or two after your baby is born — may include:

Mood swings Anxiety

Sadness Irritability

Feeling overwhelmed Crying

Reduced concentration Appetite problems

Trouble sleeping

**Postpartum Depression**

Some new moms experience a more severe, long-lasting form of depression known as postpartum depression. Postpartum depression is not a character flaw or a weakness. Sometimes it's simply a complication of giving birth. If you have postpartum depression, prompt treatment can help you manage your symptoms and help you bond with your baby.

Postpartum depression may be mistaken for baby blues at first — but the symptoms are more intense and last longer. These may eventually interfere with your ability to care for your baby and handle other daily tasks. Symptoms usually develop within the first few weeks after giving birth. But they may begin earlier — during pregnancy — or later — up to a year after birth.

Postpartum depression symptoms may include:

Depressed mood or severe mood swings, Intense irritability and anger

Crying too much, Hopelessness Severe anxiety and panic attacks

Fear that you're not a good mother. Difficulty bonding with your baby

Withdrawing from family and friends. Less interest and pleasure in activities you used to enjoy

Fear that you're not a good mother Feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt or inadequacy

Overwhelming tiredness or loss of energy Loss of appetite or eating much more than usual

Restlessness, Reduced ability to think clearly, concentrate or make decisions, sleep issues

Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

It's important to call your provider as soon as possible if the symptoms of depression have any of these features:

Don't fade after two weeks.

Are getting worse.

Make it hard for you to care for your baby.

Make it hard to complete everyday tasks.

Include thoughts of harming yourself or your baby.

Treatment

The baby blues usually fade on their own within a few days to 1 to 2 weeks. In the meantime:

Get as much rest as you can. Accept help from family and friends.

Connect with other new moms. Create time to take care of yourself.

-Make healthy lifestyle choices. Include physical activity, such as a walk with your baby, and other forms of exercise in your daily routine. Try to get enough rest. Eat healthy foods and avoid alcohol.

-Set realistic expectations. Don't pressure yourself to do everything. Scale back your expectations for the perfect household. Do what you can and leave the rest.

-Make time for yourself. Take some time for yourself and get out of the house. Do something you enjoy, such as a hobby or some form of entertainment. You might also schedule some time alone with your partner or friends.

-Avoid isolation. Talk with your partner, family and friends about how you're feeling. Ask other mothers about their experiences. Breaking the isolation may help you feel human again.

-Ask for help. Try to open up to the people close to you and let them know you need help. If someone offers to babysit, take them up on it. If you can sleep, take a nap, or maybe you can see a movie or meet for coffee with friends. You may also benefit from asking for help with parenting skills that can include caregiving techniques to improve your baby's sleep

and soothe fussing and crying.

For More information or to schedule an appointment:

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