

Pregnant and Postpartum Women



If you are pregnant or gave birth within the last year, it's important to talk to your healthcare provider about anything that doesn't feel right. It may be physical, but it could also include feelings of sadness, anxiety, and exhaustion that make it difficult to complete daily care activities for yourself, your baby or others.

You know your body best. If you experience something that seems unusual or is worrying you, don't ignore it. Talk to your healthcare provider.

i If you experience an **urgent maternal warning sign** during or after pregnancy, get medical care immediately.



During Pregnancy

Discuss your health history with your doctor during your pregnancy and make a plan for managing any potential problems that may arise based on your risk factors.

After Pregnancy

While your new baby needs a lot of attention and care, it's important to remain aware of your own body and take care of yourself, too. It's normal to feel tired and have some pain, particularly in the first few weeks after having a baby, but there are some symptoms could be signs of more serious problems.

Talk to Your Healthcare Provider

When discussing concerns with your healthcare provider, it is important to say you are pregnant or were recently pregnant. Describe any other health conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes, along with any complications you experienced with your pregnancy or

Urgent Maternal Warning Signs

- Severe headache
- Dizziness or fainting
- Changes in your vision
- Fever
- Trouble breathing
- Overwhelming tiredness
- Chest pain
- Severe belly pain
- Severe nausea and throwing up
- Severe swelling
- Thoughts about harming yourself or your baby
- [Learn More](#)

Download a print version of this guide to help share your concerns with your healthcare provider [PDF – 234 KB] 

delivery. If you can, bring a friend or family member with you for support and to help you ask the questions you need answered.

Here is a Guide to Help You Start the Conversation:

- Thank you for seeing me. I am/I was recently pregnant. The date of my last period / delivery was _____ and I'm having serious concerns about my health that I'd like to talk to you about.
- I have been having _____ (insert symptoms) that feel like _____ (describe in detail) and have been lasting _____ (number of hours/days).

Review the [urgent maternal warning signs](#) and how to describe them.

- I know my body and this doesn't feel normal.

Sample questions to ask:

- What could these symptoms mean?
- Is there a test I can have to rule out a serious problem?
- At what point should I consider going to the emergency room or calling 911?

Tips:

- Bring this conversation starter and any additional questions you want to ask to your provider.
- **Be sure to tell them that you are pregnant or have been pregnant within a year.**
- Tell the doctor or nurse what medication you are currently taking or have recently taken.
- Take notes and ask follow up questions. Clarify anything you didn't understand.

Be sure your provider schedules you for postpartum checkups after delivery. Although there's no sure way to avoid postpartum complications, staying in touch with your doctor and completing follow-up appointments can help protect your health.

Hear [personal stories](#) of pregnancy-related complications.

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