



# PREECLAMPSIA: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW & WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT IT

## The Facts



Preeclampsia is a **disease that can happen suddenly during pregnancy, usually after 20 weeks or soon after delivery.** Blood pressure can go very high. Organs like the brain, liver, and kidneys can be affected. It can cause your baby to be born too early and other health problems for both you and your baby.



## Good News! Low-Dose Aspirin Can Help.



The good news is that if you are at increased risk of preeclampsia, **starting low-dose aspirin** between 12 and 28 weeks of pregnancy can reduce your chances of getting this disease. Your pregnancy care provider can **check your risk factors** to see if this treatment is right for you.

## Is Low-Dose Aspirin Right For You?

Having **certain factors increases your chances** of getting preeclampsia. Complete this checklist and take it to your pregnancy care provider.

### Do you have any of these **HIGH-RISK** factors?

- I had preeclampsia in a prior pregnancy.
- I'm having twins, triplets, or more.
- I have high blood pressure.
- I have diabetes (type 1 or type 2).
- I have kidney disease.
- I have an autoimmune disorder (lupus, antiphospholipid disorder).

If you checked **ONE OR MORE** of these boxes

Talk to your pregnancy care provider about starting low-dose aspirin to reduce your risk.

If you checked **TWO OR MORE** of these boxes

### Do you have any of these **MODERATE-RISK** factors?

- This will be my first child.
- I will be 35 years or older when my baby is born.
- I am obese [body mass index (BMI) is 30 or more].\*
- This is an IVF pregnancy.
- I am African American or have African or Afro-Caribbean ancestry.
- My mother or sister had preeclampsia during pregnancy.
- I have had a previous pregnancy and the most recent was more than 10 years ago.
- I had a previous child who weighed less than 5½ pounds (2.5 kg) at birth.
- I weighed less than 5½ pounds (2.5 kg) when I was born.
- I have a challenging financial, social, or personal situation.

### ABOUT LOW-DOSE ASPIRIN

- Taking low-dose aspirin during pregnancy to reduce the risk of preeclampsia is safe. It does not cause birth defects, bleeding, or other problems.
- **Do not give** aspirin to a baby, child, or teenager without a doctor's advice. You may have heard low-dose aspirin referred to as "baby aspirin," but this term is not correct. Low-dose aspirin is actually dangerous for babies and children.
- Do not start taking aspirin during or after pregnancy on your own. Only do so if your pregnancy care provider tells you to.



\* A BMI calculator can be found online at [CDC.gov](http://CDC.gov).

## Extra Care For A Healthy Pregnancy

Women at risk for preeclampsia may see a **maternal-fetal medicine subspecialist ("MFM")** in addition to their usual pregnancy care provider. MFMs specialize in caring for women who have had pregnancy problems in the past, women with chronic health conditions, and women who develop unexpected problems during a current pregnancy. To learn more, go to [SMFM.ORG/WHATWEDO](http://SMFM.ORG/WHATWEDO).



Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

High-risk pregnancy experts