

## Intrahepatic Cholestasis of Pregnancy: Risks Symptoms and Treatment Options for Maternal and Fetal Well-being

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### DESCRIPTION

Pregnancy is a time of significant physical and emotional changes for a woman and while it is often a period of joy and anticipation, it can also bring a variety of health challenges. Understanding and managing pregnancy-related disorders are important for ensuring the health and well-being of both the mother and the developing fetus. This study explores common disorders during pregnancy, their causes, symptoms, potential risks and management strategies.

### Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM)

**Overview:** Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy. It occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin to meet the increased needs during pregnancy, leading to high blood sugar levels.

**Hormonal changes:** Pregnancy hormones can interfere with the body's ability to use insulin effectively.

**Risk factors:** Obesity, a history of GDM, advanced maternal age and a family history of diabetes.

**Symptoms:** Increased thirst, Frequent urination, Fatigue, Blurred vision, Macrosomia (large baby), preterm birth, respiratory distress syndrome and increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life, Preeclampsia, increased risk of cesarean delivery and higher likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes postpartum.

**Management:** A balanced diet and regular physical activity can help manage blood sugar levels, Regular blood glucose monitoring, insulin therapy if blood sugar levels are not controlled through diet and exercise.

### Preeclampsia

**Overview:** Preeclampsia is a condition characterized by high blood pressure and signs of damage to another organ system, most often the liver and kidneys. It typically occurs after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

**Risk factors:** First pregnancy, history of preeclampsia, multiple gestation (twins or more), obesity, age (teenage or over 35) and preexisting conditions such as hypertension and diabetes.

**Symptoms:** High blood pressure, Protein in urine, Severe headaches, Vision changes, Upper abdominal pain, Nausea or vomiting.

**Risks:** Restricted growth, preterm birth and stillbirth, Organ damage (kidneys, liver, brain), eclampsia (seizures) and increased risk of cardiovascular diseases.

**Management:** Regular prenatal visits to monitor blood pressure and urine protein levels, Antihypertensive drugs to lower blood pressure, corticosteroids to enhance fetal lung maturity if early delivery is necessary, the only definitive cure is delivery of the baby, often recommended if the condition is severe.

### Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG)

**Overview:** Hyperemesis gravidarum is a severe form of nausea and vomiting during pregnancy, far beyond the typical morning sickness.

**Risk factors:** First pregnancy, multiple gestation, history of HG and family history of HG.

**Symptoms:** Severe nausea and vomiting, Dehydration, weight loss, electrolyte imbalance

**Risks:** Low birth weight and preterm birth if severe and untreated, severe dehydration, nutritional deficiencies and psychological stress.

**Management:** Intravenous fluids to treat dehydration, Anti-nausea medications (such as ondansetron and metoclopramide), Vitamin B6, ginger and in severe cases, nutritional supplementation through feeding tubes.

### Placenta previa

**Overview:** Placenta previa occurs when the placenta partially or completely covers the cervix, the opening to the uterus, which can cause severe bleeding during pregnancy and delivery.

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**Risk factors:** Previous placenta previa, prior cesarean delivery, multiple pregnancies, advanced maternal age and smoking.

**Symptoms:** Painless vaginal bleeding in the second or third trimester, Premature contractions.

**Risks:** Preterm birth and complications related to prematurity, severe bleeding (hemorrhage), which may necessitate early delivery or cesarean section.

**Management:** Regular ultrasounds to monitor placental position, bed rest or reduced physical activity, Cesarean delivery is often recommended if the placenta covers the cervix at term.

### **Intrahepatic Cholestasis of Pregnancy (ICP)**

**Overview:** Intrahepatic cholestasis of pregnancy is a liver disorder that occurs in late pregnancy, characterized by severe itching.

**Risk factors:** Previous Intrahepatic Cholestasis of Pregnancy (ICP), multiple pregnancies and family history of liver diseases.

**Symptoms:** Intense itching, particularly on the hands and feet, without rash, dark urine and pale stools, Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes).

**Risks:** Preterm birth, fetal distress and stillbirth, Increased risk of postpartum hemorrhage.

**Management:** Ursodeoxycholic acid to improve liver function and reduce itching, regular fetal monitoring and early delivery if necessary.