

Urgent Maternal Warning Signs

These signs can appear **during pregnancy and up to a year after birth**. You know your body best. If something feels wrong, speak up and get checked.



! Seek medical care immediately if you notice any of these signs. **In an emergency, call 911.**

HEART, LUNGS & HEAD

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Chest pain
Tightness or pressure in the chest, a fast heartbeat, or pain spreading to your arm, neck, or back.
- 
Trouble breathing
Sudden shortness of breath or chest tightness, especially when lying flat.
- 
Headache
A headache that won't go away or gets worse over time.
- 
Changes in vision
Blurry or double vision, flashes of light, spots, or briefly not being able to see.
- 
Dizziness
Lightheadedness, fainting, or passing out.

BELLY, BABY & BLEEDING

- 
Severe belly pain
Sharp, stabbing, or cramp-like pain that won't go away or gets worse.
- 
Severe nausea or vomiting
Unable to drink for more than 8 hours or eat for more than 24 hours.
- 
Baby's movement changes **DURING**
Baby is moving less than before, or not at all.
- 
Vaginal bleeding **DURING**
Any bleeding more than spotting, or vaginal discharge that smells bad.
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Vaginal bleeding **AFTER**
Soaking one or more pads an hour, clots bigger than an egg, passing tissue, or bad-smelling discharge.

WHOLE BODY & MIND

- 
Extreme swelling
Hands or face so swollen it's hard to wear rings or fully open your eyes.
- 
Pain in leg or arm
Swelling, pain, or redness in the leg (usually the calf) or arm on one side.
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Fever
A temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
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Intrusive thoughts
Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, deep sadness, hopelessness, or extreme worry.

You're not alone. Free, 24/7 support:

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text)
1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262) National Maternal Mental Health Hotline

DURING pregnancy only **AFTER** birth only.
All other signs apply to both.

When you call or arrive, say:

"I am pregnant (or was pregnant in the last year) and I'm having _____ lasting for _____. I know my body and this doesn't feel normal."

Source: CDC Hear Her campaign, cdc.gov/hearher/maternal-warning-signs

This summary is for education only and is not a substitute for medical advice. Always contact your provider with concerns.

Read the full article: birthx.org/blog/urgent-warning-signs-during-and-after-pregnancy/