

Your Health After Pregnancy: Signs to Watch For

FOR ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN PREGNANT, EXPERIENCED A PREGNANCY LOSS, OR GIVEN BIRTH IN THE PAST YEAR



If you notice any of the symptoms listed below, contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible. If you cannot reach them, go to an urgent care clinic or the nearest emergency department. If your symptoms feel severe or you feel unsafe, call 911.



Are you bleeding a lot?

This can include soaking a maxi pad within an hour or passing blood clots larger than an egg.



Do you have strong or worsening belly pain?

This may be sharp or deep pain that gets worse when the area is touched or pressed.



Do you have a sudden or very bad headache that is worse than usual or feels different from your usual headaches?

This may come on quickly, feel very intense, last a long time, not improve with over-the-counter pain medicines like Tylenol or Advil, or be focused at the front of your head.



Has swelling, warmth or redness appeared in your face, hands, feet or in one leg?

This can look like puffiness, tightness, warmth or soreness that develops fast or affects only one leg.



Are you feeling chest pain or pressure?

This can feel like tightness, squeezing or discomfort in your chest.



Do you have a fever of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher, or feel very unwell?

This may include chills, weakness, dizziness or feeling generally sick.



Are you short of breath or finding it hard to breathe?

This may feel like you cannot catch your breath or breathing takes extra effort.



Are you extremely tired, even after resting?

This can feel like exhaustion that makes daily tasks difficult.



Has your vision changed suddenly?

This can include developing blurred vision, spots, flashing lights or losing part of your vision.



Have you fainted, felt close to fainting or noticed your heart racing?

This may feel like light-headedness, a fast heartbeat or your heart pounding.



Do you have redness, warmth or swelling in one breast?

This may feel sore, hot or painful when you touch it and may include nipple pain or redness.



Are you feeling very sad, anxious or having thoughts about harming yourself or your baby?

This can include big changes in mood or behaviour, intense worry or thoughts that scare you.



Have you noticed changes when you pee or in your vaginal discharge?

This may include burning when you pee or discharge that has a very strong, foul or rotten smell.



Are you taking any medications or using substances (prescribed or not) that affect your mood, stress, pain or sleep?

This can include feeling very unwell, sleeping more than usual, or having trouble caring for yourself or your baby.

Getting Help

For any other questions or emotional support, the resources below are available.

Medical Questions or Follow-Up (Ontario)

- **Health 811:**
Dial **811** or visit health811.ontario.ca to speak with a nurse.

Mental Health Support (Ontario)

- **Call or text 9-8-8:**
Suicide Crisis Helpline (available 24/7)
- **Mental Health Helpline:**
1-866-531-2600 (available 24/7)
or visit connexontario.ca
- **Hope for Wellness Helpline:**
1-855-242-3310 (available 24/7)
or visit hopeforwellness.ca
Supports First Nations, Inuit and Métis people



What to Expect When You Seek Care

A healthcare provider will ask questions about your symptoms, including when they started, how they feel, and whether they have changed. They may check your vital signs (such as blood pressure, heart rate and temperature) and talk with you about how you have been feeling emotionally, including your mood and energy. They may also ask about your pregnancy and birth, including any health concerns you experienced, as this information can help guide your care. Your provider will explain what they think may be happening, discuss any next steps, answer your questions, and help connect you with supports or services available in your area if needed.

This information sheet is available in other languages. Scan the QR code to see them.



This information sheet is for general information only and does not replace medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.