

Look for Urgent Maternal Warning Signs. You Can Help Save Her Life.

A guide for family and friends.



How Can You Help?

If a pregnant or recently pregnant woman says she has concerns about her health, take time to hear her. You can help save her life by listening to her and acting quickly.

- Learn the urgent maternal warning signs.
- Listen to her concerns.
- Encourage her to contact her health care provider if something doesn't feel right. If she is experiencing an urgent maternal warning sign, which are symptoms that may mean something more serious is going on with her health, she should get medical care immediately.
- Offer to go with her to get medical care and help her ask questions.
- Take notes and help her talk to a health care provider to get the support she needs.
- Ask for a translator if she doesn't speak the same language as her health care provider.
- Go with her to follow-up appointments. Help keep an eye on how she is feeling.

Urgent Maternal Warning Signs

If someone who is pregnant or was pregnant in the last year has any of these symptoms, she should get medical care immediately.

- Severe headache that won't go away or gets worse over time
- Dizziness or fainting
- Thoughts about harming herself or her baby
- Changes in vision
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- Extreme swelling of hands or face
- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain or fast-beating heart
- Severe nausea and throwing up (*not like morning sickness*)
- Severe belly pain that doesn't go away
- Baby's movement stopping or slowing during pregnancy
- Vaginal bleeding or fluid leaking during pregnancy
- Heavy vaginal bleeding or fluid leaking that smells bad after pregnancy
- Swelling, redness or pain of her leg
- Overwhelming tiredness

This list is not meant to cover every symptom a woman might experience during or after pregnancy. Learn more about urgent maternal warning signs at dshs.texas.gov/HearHerTX

Hear Her Concerns: During and After Pregnancy

Complications can happen during pregnancy and for a year after. If your friend or family member says that something doesn't feel right, support her. Help her get the care and answers she may need. Look for urgent maternal warning signs. These are symptoms that may indicate a more serious medical condition is occurring. Get her immediate medical attention if she experiences these symptoms. Use these phrases to guide your conversation:

During Pregnancy

- It's hard to tell what's normal with everything that's changing right now. It's better to check if there's anything you are worried about.
- It's important that we share this information with your health care provider and make sure everything is okay.
- I am here for you. Let's talk to a health care provider to get you the care you need.

After Pregnancy

- It's normal to feel tired and have some pain after giving birth, but you know your body best. If something is worrying you, you should talk to your health care provider.
- While your new baby needs a lot of attention and care, it's important to take care of yourself, too.
- You are not alone. I hear you. Let's talk to a health care provider to get you the care you need.



Learn more about how to support her during and after pregnancy at dshs.texas.gov/HearHerTX

HEAR and Hear Her Concerns are trademarks of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Texas Department of State
Health Services



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services