

Pregnancy Complications/Health Problems

Complication	Explanation
Preterm Labor	Labor that starts prior week 37
Cervical thinning or dilatation	Any shortening, thinning, or opening of the cervix
Premature Rupture of Membranes (PROM)	Amniotic fluid bag surrounding baby ruptures or leaks before labor begins
Uterine infection	Infection of the uterus which can be passed on to the baby. Signs include fever and uterine tenderness.
Gestational Diabetes	Pregnancy induced high blood sugar. Diabetes that begins in pregnancy and goes away after delivery.
Preeclampsia (hypertension)	Pregnancy induced high blood pressure. Symptoms can include protein in the urine, rapid weight gain, and swelling from fluid retention.
Eclampsia (seizures)	Pregnancy induced seizures. Often due to high blood pressure.
HELLP syndrome (kidney/liver failure)	Life-threatening condition where mother's liver and kidney function deteriorates and baby is delivered.
Intrauterine Growth Restriction (IUGR)	Baby's size is much less than normal for his/her gestational age. (Sometimes referred to as "small for gestational age".)
Placental previa	The placenta is abnormally positioned over the cervix. This can result in bleeding during mid or late pregnancy
Placental abruption	Detachment of the placenta. This may cause substantial bleeding
Vaginal bleeding	Any bleeding other than minor spotting
Twin-twin transfusion	Due to a shared placenta, one twin receives too much blood and the other receives too little blood. Twins are very different in size.
Fetal distress	Decreased heart rate or decreased movement.
Too much amniotic fluid	Also known as polyhydramnios. Mother measures larger than expected. Diagnosis is confirmed by ultrasound.
Too little amniotic fluid	Also known as oligohydramnios. Mother measures smaller than expected. Diagnosis is confirmed by ultrasound.
Loss of higher-order multiple	Loss of a triplet, etc. at any point in the pre-natal period or during delivery.

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Anemia	Low number of red blood cells
Apnea	Periods where breathing stops entirely for more than 15 seconds
Bradycardia	Slower than normal heartbeat (under 100 beats per minute)
Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)	Chronic lung disease due to damage to the lungs and bronchioles.
Gastroesophageal Reflux	Liquid from the stomach that comes back up the food pipe causing "spit-up".
Hernias/Hydroceles	Weakness in the abdominal wall. Contents in the intestines or testes may "poke out".
Intraventricular Hemorrhage (IVH)	Bleeding within the ventricles of the brain rated on a scale from 1 (least severe) to 4 (most severe). May occur in either or both brain hemispheres.
Jaundice	Excessive bilirubin in the blood. Symptoms include yellow eyes and skin, irritability, and sluggishness.
Meningitis	Inflammation and swelling of the meninges (linings) that surround the brain and spinal cord
Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC)	Severe infection of the intestinal tract which may cause part of the intestines to die.
Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA)	The fetal blood vessel connecting the aorta and pulmonary artery fails to close after birth
Periventricular Leukomalacia (PVL)	Softening of the brain near the ventricles because brain tissue in that area has died
Polycythemia	Too many red blood cells resulting in sluggish blood circulation
Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS)	Breathing disorder common during the first few weeks. Often the result of insufficient lung surfactant.
Pneumonia	Infection of the lungs
Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)	A retinal disorder that is common in preemies. May get better on its own or may require laser treatment.
Sepsis	Serious blood infection