Pregnancy Warning Signs Guide

Recognizing when something is not right can save your life and your baby's life. This guide is designed to help you understand warning signs during pregnancy, trust your instincts, and advocate for timely care.

Why This Guide Matters

Many pregnancy complications do not begin suddenly. Symptoms may start mild and worsen over time. Too often, pregnant individuals are told their concerns are "normal." This guide helps you recognize when symptoms need medical attention and empowers you to speak up.

Call Your Provider or Seek Emergency Care If You Experience:

- Heavy bleeding or passing clots
- Severe abdominal or pelvic pain
- Severe headache that does not go away
- Vision changes such as blurriness or seeing spots
- Swelling of the face, hands, or sudden swelling of the feet
- Decreased or no fetal movement
- High fever (over 100.4°F)
- Chest pain or shortness of breath

Understanding Common Warning Signs

Bleeding: Light spotting can be common early in pregnancy, but heavy bleeding, clots, or bleeding accompanied by pain is not normal and requires immediate care.

Headaches & Vision Changes: Persistent headaches, flashing lights, or blurred vision can be signs of preeclampsia, a serious pregnancy complication.

Swelling: Sudden swelling in the face or hands is not typical and should be evaluated.

When to Go to the ER vs. Call Your Provider

Go to the emergency room immediately if symptoms are severe, sudden, or worsening. Call your provider for concerns that are mild but persistent. If you feel unsure, it is always safer to seek immediate care.

Advocating for Yourself

You have the right to be heard. If you feel dismissed, say:
- "I am concerned about my symptoms and need further evaluation."
- "Please document my symptoms in my chart."
- "I would like a second opinion."

Trust Your Instincts

You know your body better than anyone else. If something does not feel right, seek care. Do not wait. Your life matters. Your baby's life matters.