



Supporting the birth that is right for you!

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The Following Events Justify an Immediate Call to your Midwife

By Rebecca Pugh

- **Vaginal Bleeding**-there are varying degrees of vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, some are benign and some raise concern-some breakthrough or implantation bleeding is normal during early pregnancy, the amount and associated symptoms are important-be sure to note the amount and whether it is accompanied by low back pain, contractions, cramping, vaginal pressure, or pain-miscarriage, fibroids or cysts, or aggressive sexual intercourse are some possible causes-call the midwife to determine the cause of the bleeding.
- **Facial or Hand Edema**-generalized swelling could be indicative of preeclampsia-notify the midwife.
- **Sudden and Prolonged Nausea and Vomiting**-some nausea and vomiting due to morning sickness in early pregnancy is normal, however if it is severe, sudden, or prolonged medical attention is necessary-dehydration or nutritional deficit could occur for you and/or the baby-this could indicate preeclampsia-call the midwife.
- **Fever or Chills**-this could indicate maternal or amniotic sac infection or severe preeclampsia-it could also be the result of a benign cause such as strenuous exercise, a cold or flu, or overheating-let your midwife determine the cause immediately.
- **Sudden Sharp Continuing Abdominal Pain**-inflammation of the gallbladder, appendicitis, or placenta abrupta must be ruled out-note the quality, frequency, and severity of the pain as you are calling the midwife and note any other symptoms such as fever, nausea, or bleeding.
- **Continuing Severe Headache**-this could be indicative of preeclampsia, a serious disease of pregnancy that deserves immediate attention-most headaches in pregnancy are due to dehydration or hypoglycemia, if this is not your case, call immediately-also rule out toxin exposure, lack of sleep, eye strain or tension-if the headache is continuing and severe, call the midwife.
- **Visual Changes**-this includes blurred vision, dizziness, spots, or flashes of light-these visual disturbances could be indicative of preeclampsia, a dangerous disease of pregnancy, your condition should be checked immediately-these could also be indicative of very low blood pressure or dehydration-regardless the midwife should be called.
- **Sudden Gush of Fluid from the Vagina**-this could mean your amniotic fluid sac has ruptured prematurely-the baby's condition should be checked immediately- note the color of the fluid that came out, its amount, and any matter that was expelled at the same time-also note if anything if coming out of your vagina, such as the umbilical cord or a baby limb-make these observations while the midwife is being called.
- **Abnormal Urination**-this includes pain upon urination, lack thereof, or a dark brown colored urine-pain, urgency, and burning upon urination or blood in the urine indicates a urinary tract infection which needs to be treated before it moves to the kidneys-a brown color or lack of urination indicates severe dehydration, begin drinking clear fluids as you call the midwife.

