

# "Someone call the doc!"



## When should you sound the alarm?

### Before 12 weeks:

**Vaginal bleeding:** Light spotting or bleeding early in the pregnancy may be a sign of miscarriage or an ectopic pregnancy (where the foetus is outside the womb). Consult your doctor.

**Abdominal pain:** Severe abdominal pain may be a sign of ectopic pregnancy and could be life-threatening. See the doctor immediately.

**Severe vomiting:** If you are throwing up so badly that you cannot keep any food or drinks down, see the doctor. He can prescribe medication to help you manage this better, and may admit you to the hospital if you are severely dehydrated.

### From 13 – 24 weeks:

**Vaginal bleeding:** This could be due to a late miscarriage. See your doctor immediately.

**Vaginal discharge:** It is common to experience vaginal discharge during pregnancy because of hormonal changes. If there is an excessively large amount or it changes in texture, colour and smell, tell your doctor.



### From 25 – 37 weeks:

**Headache and limbs swelling:** If your headache and limbs swelling are severe or associated with dizziness, vomiting, blurred vision or upper abdominal pain, it could be a sign of pre-eclampsia (see page 41), which is dangerous if left unchecked.

Attend your antenatal appointments faithfully and complete your blood pressure and urine assessment each time.

**Abdominal pain:** Regular, painful uterine contractions or tightening of the abdomen can be a sign of pre-term labour. If the pain persists, go to the hospital.

**Vaginal bleeding:** If you spot blood stained mucus before you are due, this could be a "show" – a mucus plug that is dislodged from the neck of the womb when it begins to dilate. If it is accompanied by painful contractions, you may be in pre-term labour!

You will also need immediate attention if there is bright red bleeding (like menses). This is potentially serious and could be due to low placental placement or premature placental separation.

**Reduced foetal movement:** If you feel that your baby is moving less than usual, monitor your baby's movement for a while. If you are worried, see your doctor or go to the hospital immediately.

**Leaking of water:** It could be a continuous flow or a sudden gush of clear fluid from the vagina. If you are not certain if your water bag is leaking, consult your doctor immediately, as you are at risk of infection and going into labour.