

Gestational Hypertension (High Blood Pressure) in Pregnancy and Post-Partum

There is a range for normal blood pressure. Usually, blood pressure above 140/90 is too high. "Gestational hypertension" (GHTN) is the term for blood pressure that is too high in pregnancy or post-partum.

If you have GHTN, your blood pressure will often go back to normal once your baby is born. But for some people, we see the highest numbers or "peak" at 3-6 days after delivery. Sometimes high blood pressure can be part of an urgent medical problem called "preeclampsia". To make sure you're healthy after the birth of your baby, you can expect these things:

- Often stay in the hospital for at least 24 hours
- Blood pressure checks
- Blood testing
- Urine testing
- Questions about headaches, chest pain, vision changes, pain in your upper belly

Questions from Parents:

Q: If my blood pressure is 140/90 or greater, how would you treat it?

A: You may need medicine to lower your blood pressure.

Q: What if I have symptoms of high blood pressure?

A: This is an urgent medical problem. You may need medicine or more tests.

Q: What happens when I go home?

A: You will often be asked to check your blood pressure at home or in a pharmacy to make sure it goes back to normal.

Q: What if my blood pressure stays high after 2 weeks?

A: You will be closely watched by your maternity care provider and/or family doctor.

Q: What happens if my blood pressure gets higher or I get symptoms when I'm at home?

A: You should phone your maternity care provider, family doctor, or 811 if your blood pressure is 140/90 or greater. If your blood pressure is 160/110 or greater, and/or you have symptoms, you should go to the nearest emergency room.