

## Mayo Clinic - Risk factors of preeclampsia

*Preeclampsia develops only during pregnancy.*

Risk factors include:

History of preeclampsia. A personal or family history of preeclampsia increases your risk of developing the condition.

First pregnancy. The risk of developing preeclampsia is highest during your first pregnancy.

New paternity. Each pregnancy with a new partner increases the risk of preeclampsia over a second or third pregnancy with the same partner.

Age. The risk of preeclampsia is higher for pregnant women younger than 20 and older than 40.

Obesity. The risk of preeclampsia is higher if you're obese.

Multiple pregnancy. Preeclampsia is more common in women who are carrying twins, triplets or other multiples.

Prolonged interval between pregnancies. This seems to increase the risk of preeclampsia.

Diabetes and gestational diabetes. Women who develop gestational diabetes have a higher risk of developing preeclampsia as the pregnancy progresses.

History of certain conditions. Having certain conditions before you become pregnant – such as chronic high blood pressure, migraine headaches, diabetes, kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis or lupus – increases the risk of preeclampsia.

Other possible factors Researchers are studying whether these factors may be associated with a higher risk of preeclampsia:

Having other health conditions. There's some evidence that both urinary tract infections and periodontal disease during pregnancy are associated with an increased risk of preeclampsia, which may indicate that antibiotics could play a role in prevention of preeclampsia. More study is needed. Vitamin D insufficiency. There's also some evidence that insufficient vitamin D intake increases the risk of preeclampsia, and that vitamin D supplements in early pregnancy could play a role in prevention. More study is needed.

High levels of certain proteins. Pregnant women who had high levels of certain proteins in their blood or urine have been found to be more likely to develop preeclampsia than are other women. These proteins interfere with the growth and function of blood vessels – lending evidence to the theory that preeclampsia is caused by abnormalities in the blood vessels feeding the placenta. Although more research is needed, the discovery suggests that a blood or urine test may one day serve as an effective screening tool for preeclampsia.