

TOXEMIA...
Pre-eclampsia...
Pregnancy Induced Hypertension/PIH

What is Toxemia/Pre-eclampsia/PIH?

Toxemia also called pre-eclampsia or PIH, is a serious pregnancy complication that experts do not understand completely. Research is still being done to try to discover what causes this complication and why it affects some women and not others.

We do know a few things. Normally in pregnancy a woman's body needs more oxygen. Blood is the substance responsible for carrying oxygen in the body. In order to make blood the body needs water, protein, salt, and minerals. When a woman has toxemia, it appears that her blood volume doesn't expand as it normally would. This stresses her liver (the organ responsible for making more blood), her kidneys (which filter the blood), and her nervous system. When the placenta is poorly supplied with blood, the baby doesn't get enough oxygen or nutrients to grow properly.

What does toxemia cause?

- A baby who doesn't grow well
- Fetal compromise due to lack of oxygen
- Liver damage
- Maternal convulsions or death

If you develop this illness, you will not be able to birth at home because of toxemia's serious complications. You must take care of yourself to prevent this disease.