

# CHOLESTASIS OF PREGNANCY



## CHOLESTASIS OF PREGNANCY

Cholestasis of pregnancy is a liver problem. It slows or stops the normal flow of bile coming from the gallbladder. This causes itching and yellowing of the skin, eyes, and mucous membranes (jaundice). It sometimes begins in the first trimester; however, it is more common in the second and third trimester.

## CAUSES

The cause is not known. Pregnancy hormones may play a role. Doctors believe this may slow the normal flow of bile, which is the digestive fluid produced in the liver that helps the digestive system break down fats. Instead of flowing out of the liver, bile accumulates inside the liver. As a result, bile salts enter the bloodstream, which can cause you to feel itchy.

## SYMPTOMS

The main symptom is a very intense itching. It can be felt all over the body, however, it is most common on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. The itching is usually worse at night and can be so annoying that it keeps you awake at night.

## Other signs and symptoms are:

- Nauseas
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Light-colored feces
- Yellowing of the skin, eyes and mucous membranes

## COMPLICATIONS

Complications can occur in the mother or the baby during pregnancy.

### For the mother, it may be:

- Poor absorption of fats
- Low vitamin K levels
- Problems with blood clotting

### For the baby, it may be:

- Premature birth
- Lung problems from inhaling meconium (baby's first feces) into the placenta
- Fetal death

## DIAGNOSIS

Your health care provider will probably suspect cholestasis of pregnancy if you have severe itching. Laboratory and other tests will be done to help confirm the diagnosis.

## TREATMENT

The goals of treatment are to relieve itching and prevent complications. Treatment may include:

- **Medications.** To help relieve itching and lower the bile level.
- **Measurement of the total serum bile acid level.** The level of bile in your blood may be checked.
- **Fetal monitoring.** The health care provider may check the developing baby for any possible problems.
- **Early delivery.** You may deliver your baby early, between 37 and 38 weeks of pregnancy. This will decrease the risk to the baby.



For more information, please contact the Clinical Management Unit at **787.706.2552** or [commercialclinicalmanagement@ssspr.com](mailto:commercialclinicalmanagement@ssspr.com)



Triple-S Salud, Inc. cumple con las leyes federales aplicables de derechos civiles y no discrimina en base a raza, color, origen de nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad, o sexo. Triple-S Salud, Inc. complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística llame al 787-774-6060, Libre de costo 1-800-981-3241. (TTY/TDD) al 787-792-1370 o 1-866-215-1999. ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 787-774-6060, Free of charge 1-800-981-3241. (TTY/TDD) 787-792-1370 or 1-866-215-1999. Independent Licensee of BlueCross BlueShield Association. TSS-EDS-3843-2022-B