Injuries In Pregnancy

Studies have shown that trauma is the most common cause of injury and death in pregnant women. The most common cause of death of unborn babies is injury and death of the pregnant mother. Minor falling injuries and minor automobile accidents do not usually harm the baby. This is because they are protected in the womb by the sac filled with fluid. Your baby can be harmed if there is direct trauma to the uterus or placenta. Direct trauma can affect the blood supply to the baby.

It is important to know your blood type and the father's blood type in case you develop vaginal bleeding. If you have RH negative and the father has RH positive, you will need to have a Rho gam (Rh immune globulin) to avoid Rh problems to your baby.

COMMON CAUSES OF INJURY ARE:

- Falls.
  - Falls are more common in the second and third trimester of the pregnancy. This is because of the increase weight and the change of your center of gravity. As the pregnancy progresses, the easier it is to lose your balance or trip over an object that cannot be seen.
- Automobile accidents. It is important to wear a seat belt.
- Domestic violence or assault. Call 911 or the police right away.
- Burns (fire or electrical). Avoid fires, starting fires and fixing electrical problems.

The most common cause of death to the pregnant woman include:

- Injuries that cause severe bleeding, shock and loss of blood flow to the major organs.
- Head and neck injuries.
- Respiratory failure.

These injuries place the baby at risk for severe harm and also death.

SYMPTOMS and TREATMENT will depend on the type of injury.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Call your caregiver if you are in a car accident, even if you think you and the baby are not hurt.
- **Do not** take aspirin. It can cause bleeding.
- You may apply cold packs 3 to 4 times a day to the injury with your caregiver's permission.
- After 24 hours apply warm compresses to injured site with your caregiver's permission.
- Call your caregiver if you need stronger medication for pain.
- In a severe injury, try to have someone be with you and help you until you are able to take care of yourself.
- **Do not** wear high heel shoes while pregnant.
- Make your home safe from slippery rugs and loose objects lying around.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have been assaulted (domestic or otherwise).
- You have been in a car accident.
- You develop vaginal bleeding.
- You develop fluid leaking from the vagina.
- You develop uterine contractions.
- You develop neck stiffness or pain.
- You become weak or faint.
- You had a serious burn.

- You develop a headache or vision problems.
- You do not feel the baby moving or the baby is not moving as much as before.

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