

## **What is the Rh factor?**

The Rh factor is a protein found on the surface of red blood cells in people who are Rh positive. Therefore, if you are Rh negative your red blood cells do not have this protein and your blood type is considered Rh negative.

## **What does this mean for my pregnancy?**

If you are Rh negative and your partner is Rh positive your baby may have Rh positive blood. This means that if your baby's blood gets into your bloodstream, your body will understand that it is not your blood and will attack the foreign antibodies. If these antibodies cross the placenta it means that your body will try to protect you from your baby's blood.

## **How can my baby's blood get in my bloodstream?**

Typically during pregnancy you and your baby's blood won't mix, but sometimes small amounts of your baby's blood can mix with yours. This can happen during labour and birth or during some procedures during pregnancy.

## **How can I protect my baby?**

Moms that are at risk for Rh incompatibility are recommended to have a Rhogam injection. This is done at 28 weeks gestation and 72 hrs after birth if the baby's blood type is Rh positive. Rhogam may be given outside these times if you experience bleeding during pregnancy, trauma to your abdomen or after manual attempts to turn your baby from a breech position.

## **What is Rhogam?**

Rhogam will prevent your blood from creating antibodies from your baby's blood in case it crosses into your bloodstream. However, Rhogam will only work if your blood has not already created antibodies.

## **Consequences to pregnancy no Rhogam is given?**

If no Rhogam is given to an Rh negative mom, and baby's blood has entered your bloodstream, we will have to monitor baby closely for signs of fetal anemia.

## **Where do I get my Rhogam injection?**

Here at PIPC we do not provide Rhogam injections as this is a blood product, however, we will refer you to the medical out patient department at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC) and they will call you with your appointment.