



Preventing Preeclampsia

What is Preeclampsia?

Preeclampsia is a serious disease related to high blood pressure. It can happen to any pregnant woman.

Why should you care?

This disorder can range from mild, with no serious effects to severe. There are risks to you: seizures, stroke, organ damage, or death; and to your baby: small growth, premature birth or death.

Are you at risk?

Preeclampsia can be difficult to predict but some women are at higher risk if they have:

- **Preeclampsia in previous pregnancy**
- **High blood pressure when not pregnant**
- **Diabetes before pregnancy**
- **An autoimmune disorder**
- **Kidney disease**
- **Assisted reproduction**
- **Overweight/BMI over 30**
- **Having more than 1 baby (twins or triplets)**
- Age over 40
- First pregnancy
- > 10 years since last pregnancy
- Family history of preeclampsia (Mother or Sister)

If you are at risk and **less than 20 weeks** pregnant:

1. Talk to your doctor about starting ASA (aspirin) at 75-100mg once daily after 12 weeks until 36 weeks pregnant.
2. Increase intake of calcium from either food and/or supplement to 1500-2000mg/day. This is equal to ~5 servings of dairy per day OR 3-4 servings per day + 500mg supplement.
3. Speak to your doctor or other PIPC staff about how to get the right dose of Calcium supplement.

If you are at risk and **more than 20 weeks** pregnant:

1. Increase intake of calcium from either food and/or supplement to 1500-2000mg/day. This is equal to ~5 servings of dairy per day OR 3-4 servings per day + 500mg supplement.
2. Speak to your doctor or other PIPC staff about how to get the right dose of calcium supplement.

How much is 1 serving of milk or alternative?

- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup of fortified soy, almond, or rice beverage
- 3/4 cup of yogurt
- Other calcium rich foods- see PIPC's Calcium handout or book an appointment to see our dietitian