

How to join ...

Membership entitles you to regular newsletters, mailings about events and activities. Non-members can also take advantage of our services and order our publications. Donations are always appreciated.

To join, make a donation or send for further information, please fill in the form below and return it to APEC at the address on the back of this leaflet.

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| Name |
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| How did you hear about APEC? |

How can I become more involved?

As a member you will receive:

- Subscription to our three-a-year newsletter which keeps you up to date with all the latest research on pre-eclampsia
- Up-to-date information about APEC activities

- I wish to become a member £20
- I would like to pay by standing order, please send me details
- Please send me an information pack

Donations

All donations, large and small, are greatly appreciated and cumulatively make a significant difference to the services we are able to provide.

I wish to make a donation to APEC:

- £5
- £10
- £25
- £50
- Other

I enclose a cheque/PO (made out to APEC)
for £

PUBLICATIONS & SERVICES

Most of the following are included in an Information pack.

- Pre-eclampsia and Eclampsia: Your Questions Answered
- Why Blood Pressure and Urine is Checked in Pregnancy
- Turn Up, Find Out, Stay Safe - Leaflet about the importance of attending antenatal check ups
- Message in a bottle - Leaflet about the importance of urine checks in pregnancy
- Signs & Symptoms of Pre-eclampsia
- Low-dose Aspirin for High-risk Pregnancy
- HELLP Syndrome
- Eclampsia

For information on publications, please call 020 8863 3271

NEED ADVICE?
CALL THE HELPLINE
020 8427 4217

For information please write to

**APEC,
84-88 Pinner Road,
Harrow,
Middlesex,
HA1 4HZ**
or email
info@appec.org.uk

www.appec.org.uk

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**ACTION ON
PRE-ECLAMPSIA**
PROMOTING SAFER PREGNANCY



Action on Pre-Eclampsia

Things you ought to know about Pre-Eclampsia

Key facts about Pre-Eclampsia

What is it?

An illness which occurs only in pregnancy and can affect both a mother and her unborn baby. Most cases are mild, but there is a severe form which can be dangerous. Among the most serious complications are convulsions known as "eclampsia" - hence the term pre-eclampsia.

Who gets it?

About one pregnant woman in every 10. Most at risk are first-time mothers; the over-40s; those with a BMI over 35; women with a family history of pre-eclampsia; where it is ten years or more since a last baby; those suffering from high blood pressure, diabetes or kidney disease; those carrying more than one baby and those who have had it before.

What causes it?

A problem in the placenta which restricts the flow of blood to the baby. This problem develops in early pregnancy but doesn't cause illness until much later - usually in the last few weeks.

What are the signs?

High blood pressure, protein in the urine in the mother and, sometimes, poor growth in the baby - all of which should be detected by routine ante-natal checks.

How is it treated?

Women with pre-eclampsia are monitored carefully - usually in hospital or a day ward - and may be given drugs to control blood pressure.

Can it be cured?

Only by delivery of the baby, and with it the placenta that is causing the problem. That is why most women with pre-eclampsia have an induced, often early, delivery.

Does it happen again?

Some women get it again.

Can it be predicted in early pregnancy?

Not at present - which is why regular attendance at antenatal clinics is so important - but people who are more likely to get it can be identified.

Can it be prevented?

Not reliably - although small doses of aspirin taken daily under medical supervision are thought by some doctors to help in some cases.

So what can former sufferers do to help themselves?

Seek expert advice, insist on frequent antenatal checks, never miss an appointment and report any signs and symptoms to your midwife or doctor.

Pre-eclampsia is much more common than most people think - in fact it is the commonest of the serious complications of pregnancy.

What is unusual about pre-eclampsia is that doctors, midwives, parentcraft teachers and authors of maternity handbooks tend not to talk about the condition very much - often for fear of alarming pregnant women.

Pre-eclampsia can be a dangerous, even life-threatening, condition which is still too poorly understood to be preventable.

At Action on Pre-eclampsia we believe that all pregnant women should be informed about pre-eclampsia, because recognition of the signs and symptoms aids early detection which, in turn, reduces the risks for mothers and their unborn babies.

Signs to look out for

Bad headaches that don't go away

Blurred vision, flashing lights or spots before your eyes

Bad pain just below your ribs, especially on the right side

Vomiting (not the 'morning sickness' of early pregnancy)

For advice or information about any aspect of pre-eclampsia, call the Helpline on **020 8427 4217**

About Action on Pre-Eclampsia

Action on Pre-Eclampsia was set up in 1991 to ...

- raise public and professional awareness of pre-eclampsia, improve care, and ease or prevent physical and emotional suffering caused by the condition;
- educate, inform and advise the public and health professionals about the prevalence, nature and risks of pre-eclampsia;
- campaign for greater public awareness of the disease and for action to improve methods of detection and treatment;
- provide support for people who suffer or have suffered pre-eclampsia, and their families;
- promote research into the causes of the disease and appropriate screening techniques and treatment methods.

We do this by ...

- supplying comprehensive information about pre-eclampsia to pregnant women, affected families and professionals involved in their care;
- maintaining a high public profile through media campaigns and nationwide distribution of literature;
- publicising and promoting relevant research findings and encouraging new research into all aspects of the condition;
- providing a national telephone helpline, a network of local befrienders and access to expert care and advice.

