

Family History of Gestational HTN (or Preeclampsia)

Family Hx and Pregnant-woman with Hiker-BP

Gestational hypertension and preeclampsia have familial components to them, so any mothers with family history should be closely monitored for developing either condition.

Complications

IUGR

Restrictive-belt on Uterus

Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) refers to any process that causes fetal weight to be in the bottom tenth percentile for gestational age. Pregnancy-induced hypertension may contribute to IUGR of the fetus.

Prematurity

Incubator

Any birth that occurs prior to 37 weeks gestation is referred to as premature. Mothers with gestational hypertension are more likely to deliver prematurely.

Abruptio Placentae

Erupting Placenta-present

Placental abruption happens when the placenta separates from the uterine wall prematurely; it may cause massive hemorrhage and fetal death. Mothers with gestational hypertension are at increased risk for this life-threatening condition, which is an indication for emergency C-section.

Management

Fetal Monitoring

Fetus and Monitor

A developing fetus can be monitored with fetal heart rate tracings, non-stress tests, contraction stress tests and biophysical profiles. As fetuses born to mothers with gestational hypertension are at increased risk for complications, close monitoring may be indicated.

Alpha-Methyldopa

Afro Metal-dough-boy

Classified as an alpha-2 agonist, this medication works by decreasing sympathetic outflow in an effort to decrease blood pressure. Although it is safe to use during pregnancy, it is generally not effective, and carries side effects such as lupus-like syndrome and immune-mediated hemolytic anemia.

Beta-Blockers (Labetalol)

Beta-fish with Blocks

Beta-blockers, like labetalol, are commonly used to treat gestational hypertension. They can be administered in PO or IV forms.

Calcium Channel Blockers

Calcium-cow Channel with Blocks

Dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers, such as nifedipine and amlodipine, are commonly used to treat gestational hypertension.

Hydralazine

Hydra-laser

Most often reserved for hypertensive emergencies, hydralazine is a fast-acting arteriolar vasodilator that rapidly drops blood pressure. It is safe for pregnancy, but may cause a lupus-like syndrome, reflex tachycardia, fluid retention and headache.