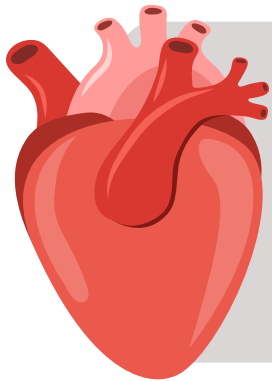




Peripartum Cardiomyopathy

Peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM), or postpartum cardiomyopathy, is a serious form of heart failure related to pregnancy. PPCM is not common but can be life threatening.

Peripartum cardiomyopathy usually happens in last month of pregnancy or the first few weeks after delivery. It can also be diagnosed, months after the baby is born.



What Does Peripartum Cardiomyopathy Do to the Heart?

PPCM causes the heart chambers to get larger and the heart muscles to weaken. When the heart is weak, it pumps less blood. This can cause low blood pressure and fluid in the lungs, liver and other organs.

Risk Factors

- ✓ Maternal age (35+)
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ High blood pressure, including preeclampsia or gestational hypertension
- ✓ Pregnancies with multiples
- ✓ PPCM is more common in patients who identify as Black, though it is not understood how race plays a role in the development of PPCM

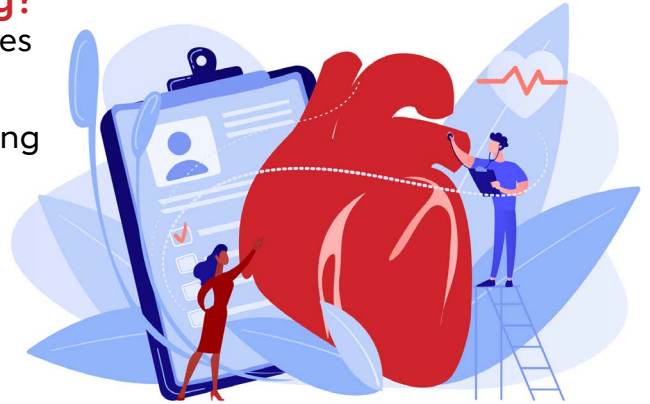


Women who develop peripartum cardiomyopathy are at high risk of developing the same condition with future pregnancies, if the heart function is not fully recovered. Be sure to talk to your healthcare team if you have a family history or have been diagnosed with PPCM.

What Causes Peripartum Cardiomyopathy?

More research is needed, but some potential causes are:

- ✓ Extra stress on the heart and blood vessels during pregnancy, including obesity before or after pregnancy
- ✓ Abnormal immune response
- ✓ Family history or genetics
- ✓ Certain hormones that are higher in women with preeclampsia



What are the Signs and Symptoms?

Signs of PPCM can be difficult to identify because they can feel like normal pregnancy symptoms:



Shortness of breath



Trouble breathing when lying flat



Lightheadedness or almost fainting



Fatigue



Swollen ankles or feet



Swelling in the abdomen with pain and bloating



Cough or chest congestion



Increased urination at night



Chest pain or tightness



Heart racing or skipping beats

If you experience these symptoms or feel worried, talk to your healthcare professional.

What You Can Do:

- ✓ Learn the signs and symptoms of PPCM.
- ✓ Talk to your healthcare professional about your risk factors for PPCM and how to be healthy during pregnancy and postpartum.
- ✓ If you have been diagnosed with PPCM, be sure to tell your healthcare team if you are considering or become pregnant again.

Learn more about:



Pregnancy
[GoRedforWomen.org/Pregnancy](https://www.GoRedforWomen.org/Pregnancy)



Postpartum
[GoRedforWomen.org/Postpartum](https://www.GoRedforWomen.org/Postpartum)