



## **Pregnancy Induced Hypertension or Preeclampsia**

Preeclampsia is also called Pregnancy Induced Hypertension (PIH) or toxemia and can occur in about 5% of pregnancies. The cause is unknown. PIH is diagnosed by a triad of physical signs that include hypertension (high blood pressure), edema (swelling) and proteinuria (protein in the urine). Symptoms may include severe headache, upper abdominal pain, blurred vision and rapid weight gain. PIH is more common in first pregnancies, multiple gestations, gestational diabetes, teenage pregnancy and pregnancy with hypertension diagnosed before 20 weeks of gestation. The treatment for PIH is delivery. If you develop PIH before your baby can be safely delivered, you may be recommended to start bed rest either at home or in the hospital. In severe cases of PIH, you may be delivered despite the gestational age as the risks of PIH to the mother may outweigh the risks of premature delivery. Severe pre-eclampsia can result in kidney failure, severe bleeding, stroke and eclampsia (seizures). Magnesium sulfate is frequently used to help prevent seizures during labor.