MOMCARE
Maternal Opioid Use Disorder Management and CARe REsources in Custody
momcarejail.org

Recognizing Urgent Maternal Warning Signs in Custody

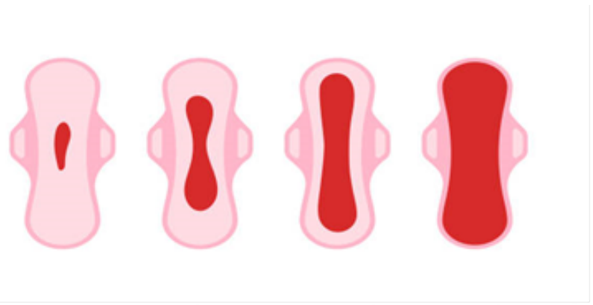
WHO: Custody and medical staff who interact with pregnant or postpartum women (at intake, housing areas, medical, etc.) are **responsible for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the pregnant woman and the baby growing inside her.**

WHAT: Urgent maternal warning signs are symptoms that pregnant and postpartum (pregnant within the last year) women may report or show that can lead to bad outcomes for mom or baby. They require **immediate** medical attention.

WHY: Some symptoms may not be worrisome outside of pregnancy, but in a pregnant woman, these could be **life-threatening either for her or the baby growing inside her (or both)**. Postpartum women can also have life-threatening complications. Correctional staff need to be able to recognize these symptoms and refer patients to medical immediately. Most bad outcomes for moms and babies can be prevented with timely, qualified medical care.

SCAN ME

Go to: https://saferbirth.org/aim-resources/aim-cornerstones/urgent-maternal-warning-signs-2/
Click each symptom to learn more details about what things women might report



ANY BLEEDING IN PREGNANCY should be evaluated immediately by a qualified provider (e.g. obstetrician, family physician, certified nurse midwife).

This will usually require offsite transport to the nearest hospital.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS

- Believe her! Listen to pregnant and postpartum women and get them to medical if they share any of these symptoms or if you observe these warning signs.
- Know the signs!

To learn more

- **Visit** https://saferbirth.org/aim-resources/aim-cornerstones/urgent-maternal-warning-signs-2/
- **Read the list of symptoms** so that you can identify when a pregnant or postpartum woman in your custody reports one of these symptoms.
- **Watch a 4-minute video** that explains urgent maternal warning signs. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UOFtIbEMe0
- **Test your knowledge** by taking this 8-question CDC quiz on recognizing the urgent maternal warning signs https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/maternal-warning-signs/quiz.html
- **Jog your memory** by thinking of when a pregnant woman came to you with one of these symptoms? Now knowing the warning signs, would you do something different?

To implement best practices

- **Print/hang up** urgent maternal warning signs flyers and posters where medical/custody staff and patients will see them. Post at intake, housing units, clinical areas, staff break rooms.
  - Other languages (bottom left under 'download UMWS')
  - Postpartum warning signs poster https://rhntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/rhntc_Postpartum-Signs-Poster-Final_05_08_24.pdf (Spanish)
- **Screen for pregnancy and postpartum** (pregnant within the last year) status at intake.
- Have a system in place to **alert staff** of pregnant or postpartum individuals in custody (e.g. on housing card)
- Develop a system that **prioritizes medical complaints from pregnant and postpartum women** for expedited medical evaluation (e.g. separate sick call for pregnant and postpartum women)