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Gestational Trophoblastic Disease - Symptoms and Signs [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the Cancer.Net Editorial Board [2], 07/2014

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about body changes and other things that can signal a problem that may need medical care. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Women with GTD may experience the following symptoms or signs. Sometimes, women with GTD do not show any of these symptoms. Or, these symptoms may be caused by a medical condition that is not GTD.

GTD may not cause any symptoms in its early stage because it may resemble a normal pregnancy. However, the following symptoms could signal a potential problem:

- Vaginal bleeding, during or after pregnancy
- A uterus that is larger than expected at a given point in the pregnancy
- Severe nausea or vomiting during pregnancy
- High blood pressure at an early point in the pregnancy. This may also include headaches and/or swelling of the feet and hands at the same time.
- A pregnancy where the baby has not moved at the expected time
- Pain or pressure in the pelvic area
- Abdominal swelling
- Anemia, which is a low red blood cell count that can cause fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, or an irregular heartbeat.
- Anxiety or irritability, including feeling shaky or severe sweating
- Sleep problems
- Unexplained weight loss

Occasionally, symptoms may appear weeks, months, or even years after a normal pregnancy and birth.

If you are concerned about one or more of the symptoms or signs on this list, please talk with your doctor. Your doctor will ask how long and how often you?ve been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a diagnosis [3].

If GTD is diagnosed, relieving symptoms remains an important part of your care and treatment. This may also be called symptom management, palliative care, or supportive care. Be sure to talk with your health care team about symptoms you experience, including any new symptoms or a change in symptoms.

In rare situations, the cancer has already spread beyond the uterus at the time of diagnosis, and other symptoms may occur depending on the location. In this case, GTD may be misdiagnosed as another health problem. For example, spread of choriocarcinoma to the brain may result in bleeding, which can be mistaken for a brain aneurysm. A beta human chorionic gonadotropin (beta hCG) blood test (see Diagnosis [3]) should help the health care team better understand the problem.

The next section helps explain what tests and scans may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Diagnosis, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/gestational-trophoblastic-disease/symptoms-and-signs
[2] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[3] http://www.cancer.net/node/18900