

Postpartum hemorrhage

Postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) is severe loss of blood after childbirth that adversely affects the patient

PPH can occur within 24 hours of delivery (Primary PPH) or up to six weeks after delivery (Secondary PPH).

PPH is one of the most serious complications of childbirth and should be treated urgently.

It usually occurs after a woman loses more than 500 ml blood after vaginal delivery, or more than 1000 ml blood after caesarean delivery. Any blood loss that adversely affects the patient must also be treated as PPH.

Most common symptoms of PPH can include:¹

- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Decreased blood pressure
- Increased heart rate
- Decrease in the red blood cell count
- Swelling and pain in the vagina and nearby area if bleeding is from a hematoma

PPH treatment can be more effective if the cause is identified quickly. This can help focus the next steps of treatment on addressing the specific cause.

Always refer the patient to the nearest high-level facility immediately in case of severe clinical symptoms.

Severe clinical symptoms are unconsciousness and collapse.



Causes of PPH are called 4Ts



Tone

Failure of uterus to contract



Trauma

Uterus or genital tract is ruptured during childbirth



Tissue

Placenta and/or membranes do not detach and deliver completely



Thrombin

Patient has a blood clotting disorder

1. University of Rochester Medical Center. Health encyclopedia: postpartum hemorrhage.