

What is a High Risk Pregnancy? | Kaiser Permanente

[Music]

So there is a number of things that can make a pregnant person high-risk. So obesity, being over 35, if you have high blood pressure, if you're coming into the pregnancy with other medical problems, diabetes or substance abuse issues.

For your obstetrician, what that means is we need to assess you a little closer and maybe a little bit more frequently. It does not mean that there is no potential for a healthy outcome and delivery with this pregnancy.

All of my pregnancies have been considered high-risk because I was 35 when I had him, 38 when I had him, and now I'm 42.

So age can be a factor because we're dealing with an increased possibility of associated genetic abnormalities or birth defects.

Sometimes when you're over the age of 35, you have a higher risk of developing other medical conditions during pregnancy like diabetes of pregnancy or hypertension of pregnancy or preeclampsia.

I was concerned about being high-risk when I decided to get pregnant because of my age. I am 40, but my doctor did prepare me and let me know that there

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were different things that I could do to make sure that I had a healthy pregnancy. And I know several women who have had pregnancies late in life and have had healthy children and good pregnancies.

We follow everybody very closely in pregnancy. We will let you know if there are things that are concerning, if you need extra tests during your pregnancy.

Especially later in pregnancy, there's something called a non-stress test where we specifically listen a little bit longer to the baby's heartbeat and measure the fluid around the baby once or twice a week depending upon the medical problem just to make sure everything's going well.

We try to work with those moms so that they have the healthiest pregnancy possible, looking at what they can do to improve their outcomes and have the healthiest pregnancy possible.

[End of recording]