



Rh Incompatibility

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Scenario: You are pregnant with your first child, flip over your cupcake and pair up with an appropriate partner if necessary

What are you?

- (-) = Rh - mother
- (+) = Rh + mother
- * = RhoGAM injection

Importance of Rh incompatibility

- Occurs when an Rh negative mother carries Rh+ fetus.
- 1st pregnancy is at low risk of sensitization.
- RhoGam is given to Rh - mother.
- After the 1st pregnancy without RhoGam the antibodies created in the prior pregnancy will attack future fetus.
- As nurses the importance of understanding Rh incompatibility is prevention of complications in the baby, and to have early detection and management to prevent sensitization.

TEACHING

Early Blood Typing

- Test mom's blood type and Rh early in pregnancy
- Identifies need for preventive treatment

Risks of Sensitization

- Sensitized moms can harm future Rh+ babies
- Can cause anemia, jaundice, or fetal death

RhoGAM Injection

- Prevents mom from forming antibodies
- Given at 28 weeks & within 72 hrs after birth if baby is Rh+, OR before any invasive procedure
- Also given after miscarriage, abortion, or trauma

Follow-up & Monitoring

- Regular prenatal visits and antibody (Coombs) tests
- Always tell providers your Rh status

Question # 1

What is Rh factor?

Rh Factor is...

A protein that is found on the surface of RBCs

Can be classified as positive (+) or negative (-)

Question #2

Positive or Negative? What does that mean?

It Means...

- ▶ That the Rh protein is either present on RBC (+) or it is not (-)
- ▶ This is a very important factor to consider when assessing your pregnant patient!
- ▶ Mom and baby can both be positive or negative

Question #3

Should I be concerned with Rh compatibility if my patient is O+ and her baby is O-?

Why or why not?

It's All Good!

Even though the Rh factor is different, baby and mom will both be fine!

As long as mom has a positive, there will be no Rh compatibility issues!

Question #4

- ▶ What if the mother is O- and her baby is O+?

Time for RhoGAM!

- ▶ If untreated, mom's antibodies will attack the future baby's RBCs and can cause anemia, jaundice, and other complications
- ▶ Mother will receive a RhoGAM injection at around 26-28 wk of pregnancy
- ▶ She will also receive a second injection within 72 hr after delivery