

## APPENDIX P: SAMPLE: DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING DELIVERY WITH DIAGNOSED PREECLAMPSIA

[NAME OF HOSPITAL, CLINIC OR PRACTICE]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

### DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING DELIVERY OF BABY PREECLAMPSIA

During your hospitalization, you have been treated for preeclampsia or HELLP syndrome. Preeclampsia is a problem that can occur in the late stages of pregnancy and even *during the first few weeks postpartum* (after delivery of your baby), and causes high blood pressure, protein in the urine and sometimes other symptoms such as headaches, blurred vision, breathlessness, and swelling of the hands or face. In the past, it has been called “toxemia” or “pregnancy-induced hypertension”. HELLP syndrome is a variation of preeclampsia that directly affects your liver and blood platelets.

Preeclampsia can be mild or severe. If it isn’t treated, preeclampsia can turn into a serious problem called “eclampsia” in which seizures occur.

#### **When you go home, follow these instructions:**

- Keep follow-up appointments with your doctor. These may be very frequent and are very important for your health.
- Take all medications prescribed for you exactly as ordered.
- Weigh yourself at the same time each day. Write down your weight and take this record with you to your doctor visits.
- If ordered by your doctor, monitor your blood pressure at home.
- Ask your doctor if you need to check your urine at home for protein.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet. Your doctor will tell you if you need to follow any special restrictions in what you eat.
- Don’t smoke.
- Don’t drink alcohol or use any drugs not prescribed to you.
- Ask your doctor before taking any medications that he or she didn’t prescribe for you. This includes any over-the-counter medications.

#### **Call your doctor if:**

- Your blood pressure is greater than \_\_\_\_\_ systolic (the top or first number).
- Your blood pressure is greater than \_\_\_\_\_ diastolic (the bottom or second number).
- You have a severe headache or dizziness.
- You have any headache that is not relieved with Tylenol or ibuprofen (e.g., Advil™, Motrin™).
- You have pain in your belly, especially the right upper area below your ribs.
- You have blurry or double vision, see spots or auras.
- Your swelling is worse.
- You gain more than 3 pounds in 3 days.
- You have serious difficulty catching your breath.
- You have any new or unusual symptoms.
- You have any questions or concerns.

***If you have any of the above symptoms, call [phone number] immediately. If you are unable to reach your physician you need to go to the emergency room for evaluation. Be sure to tell them you just had a baby and you had preeclampsia.***

Additional information about preeclampsia can be found at [www.preeclampsia.org](http://www.preeclampsia.org). There you will find accurate information about preeclampsia and related disorders of pregnancy, as well as a very friendly and helpful community of women with whom you can discuss any concerns or questions.

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