

Seeking a simple blood test to detect deadly preeclampsia disorder earlier in pregnancy

When Leigh Ann Torres was in her 29th week of pregnancy, she experienced a sudden, 14-pound [weight gain](#) along with terrible swelling in her legs and feet. At a visit to her doctor in Austin, Texas, a test showed protein in her urine—a telltale sign of a rapidly progressive disorder called [preeclampsia](#).

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Torres' experience, though terrifying, was typical. The signs and symptoms of preeclampsia don't show up until after the 20th week of pregnancy—at which point the only interventions are to monitor the patient closely or deliver the baby early.

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There are new screening protocols that can detect preeclampsia early in a pregnancy, when intervention to prevent it is still possible. But they are complicated and expensive to implement. That's why some researchers are pursuing a simple, portable and inexpensive test that can detect preeclampsia in the first trimester.

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[Researcher Noam] Shomron and colleagues are planning to develop a cheap, portable blood test to detect preeclampsia in the first trimester based on biomolecular markers. In his lab at Tel Aviv University, Shomron holds up a handheld, mobile-phone-sized DNA sequencing device made by [Oxford Nanopore Technologies](#). In the future, "this could be a preeclampsia test," he says. It would only require a drop of blood from a patient's finger.

Read full, original post: [A Simple Blood Test Could Detect a Deadly Disorder in Pregnant Women](#)