Rh Sensitization/Prevention Options

Rh factor is a protein that's found on some people's red blood cells. If your red blood cells have the protein, you're Rh-positive. If your red blood cells don't have the protein, you're Rh-negative. Being Rh-positive or Rh-negative doesn't affect your health. But it can affect your baby during pregnancy if you're Rh-negative and your baby is Rh-positive.

Antibodies develop toward Rh positive blood (Rh sensitization) when the Rh negative blood has an exposure to Rh positive blood. These antibodies can cross the placenta and attack a baby's Rh positive red blood cells, destroying them. This destruction leads to anemia, jaundice, possibly kernicterus (a neurological disorder), mental retardation, edema, congestive heart failure, or even death (10-30%). This condition could lead to the decision to have or refuse intrauterine transfusions, premature termination of the pregnancy, or the decision of accepting or refusing exchange transfusions after the baby is born. Rh sensitization is an irreversible condition.

An Rh negative pregnant person with an Rh negative partner will have an Rh negative baby. Only antibody screening is recommended and Rhogam is not indicated. However, an Rh negative pregnant person with an Rh positive partner has a 50% - 100% of having an Rh positive baby.

RhoGam is used to prevent Rh sensitization. It is a blood product, derived from human plasma, and only the Rh protein is used. No known cases of communicable infections have been reported from receiving RhoGam. Very, very rarely, a person may have an allergic reaction with symptoms of fever and chills, or shortness of breath. Most people have no reaction at all, and when they do, it is redness and swelling at the injection site. Having both the 28 week shot and the after-birth shot reduces the risk of becoming sensitized to 0.5%. 1 in 5 people who do not get Rhogam will become sensitized.

I hereby state that I have been informed about the benefits and/or risks of receiving Rh Immune Globulin (RhoGam).

- At 28 weeks, when the placenta begins to thin, for the prevention of sensitization during pregnancy. (1% risk)
- Within 3 days of birth of an Rh+ baby or miscarriage to protect the next pregnancy from sensitization and its associated risks. (12-13% risk)

After having had Rh sensitization explained to me by my midwife and after having read and understood the above information and accept full responsibility for my decision.

I hereby ❒ ACCEPT or ❒ DECLINE (check one) the administration of RhoGam at 28 weeks.
I hereby ❒ ACCEPT or ❒ DECLINE (check one) the administration of RhoGam within 72 hours of the birth of an Rh+ baby.

Client's name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/_____