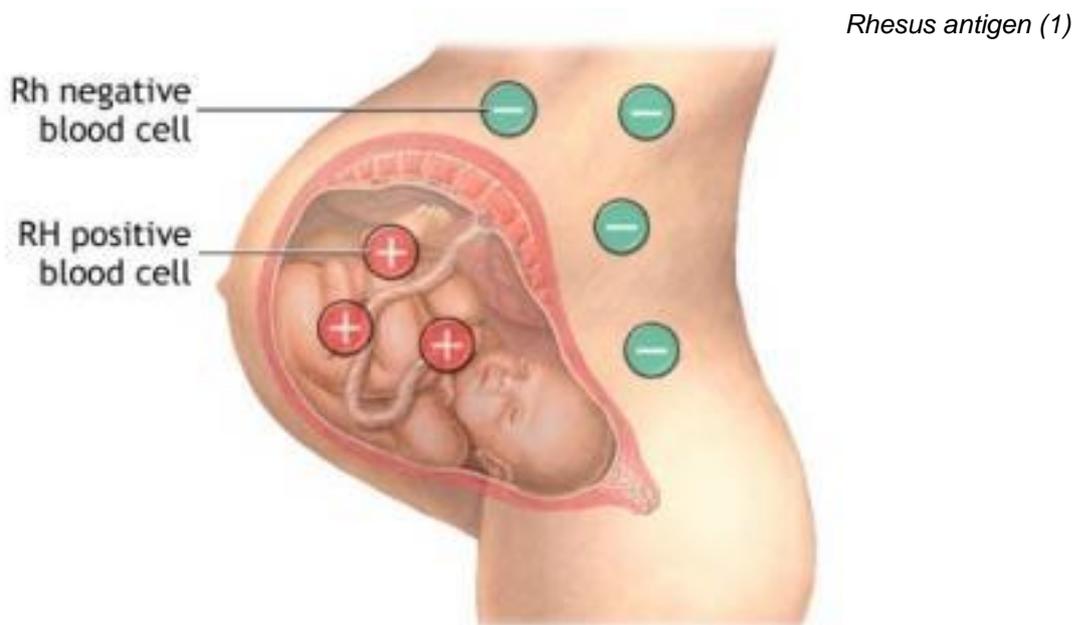
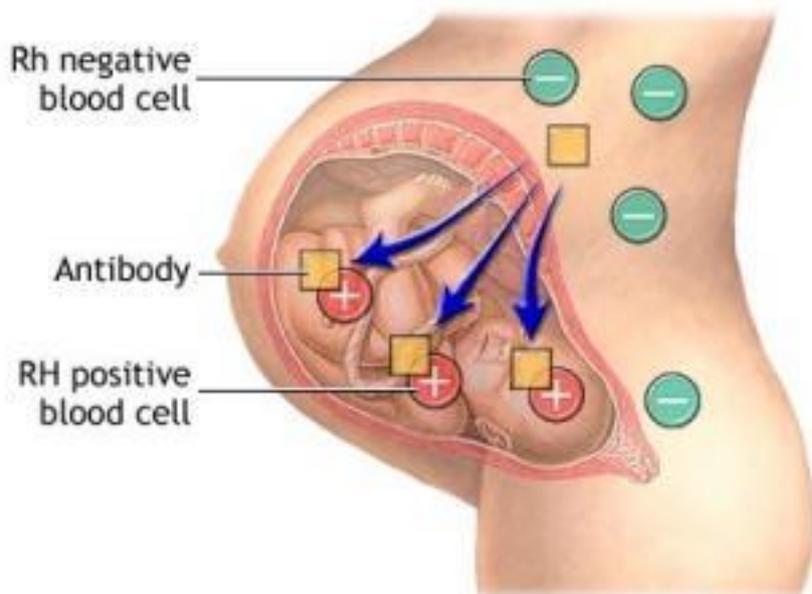
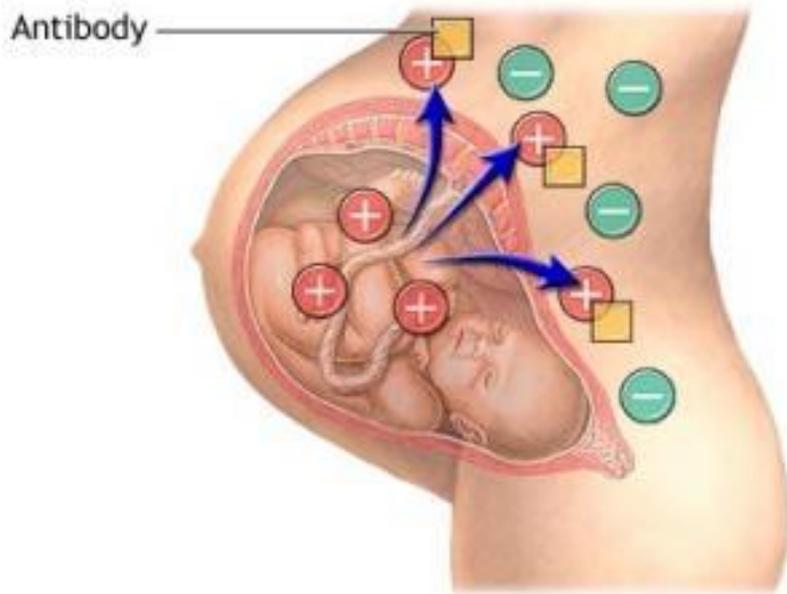


Rhesus Factor

Introduction:

The rhesus antigen is found on the surface of red blood cells of humans. If this antigen is present on the red blood cell the individual is said to be rhesus positive (rh⁺), if it is absent the person is rhesus negative (rh⁻). This antigen becomes important in pregnant women. This is because the foetus is an independent being with its own blood group as well as its own surface antigens. The mother's immune system may recognize this new individual as a threat to the mother's well-being, therefore launching an attack on the foetus.





There are different scenarios that exist in which the mother's immune system will attack the growing foetus or not.

Case 1

If the mother is rhesus positive and the baby is rhesus positive the immune system of the mother will not attack.

Case 2

If the mother is rhesus negative and the baby is rhesus positive, the mother's immune system will attack.

Case 3

If the mother is rhesus positive and the baby is rhesus negative, mother's immune system will not attack.

Case 4

The mother's immune system will not attack if the mother is rhesus negative and the baby is rhesus negative.