

## **What can I do for nausea and vomiting during pregnancy?**

Remember “any calorie is a good calorie” so eat what stays down for you.

Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Six small meals and snacks daily.

These foods may not be tolerated well:

- Greasy or fried foods
- Very sweet foods
- Spicy foods
- Foods with strong odors

Eat foods that are at room temperature or cooler. Hot foods can trigger nausea.

Avoid mixing hot and cold foods at meals.

Dry toast, crackers or dry cereal may relieve periods of nausea.

Tart or salty foods such as lemons or pickles may help decrease nausea.

Eat slowly and rest after meals. It’s best to rest sitting upright for an hour.

Drink fluids between meals.

Drink beverages chilled or cold. Decaffeinated soda is often well tolerated. However don’t opt for diet soda; you need the calories right now.

Avoid eating in a room that has cooking smells/odors.

Ask your doctor about medicine to control nausea.

These are signs that you need to call the doctor:

- Unable to keep anything down for more than two days
- Fainting
- Vomiting blood
- Rib pain
- Jaundice (skin is yellowish)
- Your weight drops more than five pounds within a week.

## **What can you do to reduce or prevent heartburn?**

Indigestion is commonly called heartburn. It is a feeling that starts in the stomach and seems to rise into the throat. It occurs when digested food from your stomach, which contains acid, is pushed up into the esophagus. Liquids that you drink also take up space in the stomach, so they may also add to the problem.

Changes that take place in your body during pregnancy may worsen indigestion. Changes in your hormones levels slow digestion and relax the muscle that normally prevents the digested

food and acids in your stomach from entering the esophagus. In addition, your growing uterus presses up on your stomach.

To help prevent heartburn, try the following:

- Eat five or six small meals instead of two or three large meals.
- Avoid foods that cause gas such as spicy or greasy food.
- Do not eat or drink several hours before bed.
- Wait two hours after eating before you do any exercise.
- Antacids may be helpful such as Maalox, Tums, or Gaviscon. Liquid may be more effective than tablets. If the problem is frequent and only briefly relieved by antacids, speak with the doctor.

## **What can I do for headaches in pregnancy?**

Headaches are common in pregnancy. Usually headaches do not signal a serious problem. You may use Tylenol (Acetaminophen) to relieve symptoms; two regular tablets or one extra strength tablet. You should contact the doctor if your headache does not go away, returns very often, is severe, causes blurry vision or spots in front of your eyes, and is accompanied by nausea.

## **What can I do for cold and allergy symptoms?**

Colds can be miserable. Many things can relieve symptoms at home, we recommend trying to following:

- Use a cool mist vaporizer/humidifier at night. This moistens the air you breath to keep secretion following.
- Saline gargles (one tsp. of salt in a ½ cup of warm water) every four hours while awake. This will cut down the mucus in the back of the throat and relieve mild soreness.
- Any brand saline nose drops (NOT regular Afrin or Neo-Synephrine) at bedtime and again when waking in the morning. This helps moisten secretions.
- Tylenol two regular tablets or one extra strength (maximum of 6 tablets in 24 hrs.) every four hours if necessary to relieve aches. Preferably not during the first trimester and not at all one week before the Quad screening.
- Take your temperature twice daily. Call us if your temp is greater than 100.4
- Coughing can be relieved with one tsp of honey and 2-3 drops of lemon juice. Hold this in your mouth until the honey thins and then swallow. You may also try Robitussin DM over the counter cough medication, after the first trimester. Cough drops are also safe in pregnancy.
- Sudafed and Dimetapp may be used for symptoms when taken as directed on the package, after your first trimester.
- Increase fluids
- Get extra rest

## **What can I do to relieve constipation?**

At least half of all women seem to have problems with constipation. One reason for this may be changes in hormones that slow the movement of the food through the digestive track. Sometime iron supplements may also cause constipation. During the last part of pregnancy, pressure on the rectum from your uterus may add to the problem. Here are some suggestions that may help:

- Drink plenty of fluids. Six to eight glasses of water each day, including one to two glasses of fruit juice such as prune. Liquids such as coffee, tea and cola which make you go to the bathroom should not be drunk. They tend to create a negative water balance in your body making your stools harder and more difficult to pass.
- Eat food high in fiber such as raw vegetables, fruits and bran cereals.
- Exercise daily.

## **Are hemorrhoids common during pregnancy?**

Very often pregnant women who are constipated also have hemorrhoids. Hemorrhoids are varicose (or swollen) veins of the rectum. They are often painful. Straining during bowel movements and having hard stools may make hemorrhoids worse and can sometimes cause them to protrude from the rectum.

Do not take drugstore cures while you are pregnant without first checking with your doctor. Hemorrhoids usually improve after the baby is born. Several things can help give you relief or avoid the problem in the first place:

- Avoid getting constipated
- Eat a high fiber diet
- Drink plenty of fluids

## **Are yeast infections common in pregnancy?**

It is not uncommon to develop a yeast infection during pregnancy. If such infection does occur, it is safe for you to use over the counter products such as Monistat. If you are early in pregnancy, before 12 weeks, it is important that the cream be used externally. After 12 weeks, it is safe to gently use the applicator internally.

## **Are leg cramps normal?**

In the last three months of pregnancy, you may find that you have more leg cramps. Get plenty of calcium (three glasses of milk or supplement) and potassium (oranges or bananas). Stretching your legs before going to bed can help relieve cramps. Avoid pointing your toes when stretching or exercising.

## **Is it normal for swelling to occur?**

A certain amount of swelling (Edema) is normal in pregnancy. It occurs most often in legs. Elevating the legs usually will make the swelling less by the next morning. Swelling can begin in the last few months of pregnancy and it may occur more often in the summer time. Let the doctor know if you have swelling in your hands or face, because this may be a sign or another problem. Never take medication (water pills) for swelling unless they have been prescribed for you. Try these tips to help with swelling:

- Elevate your legs
- Rest in bed on your side
- Lie down with your legs raised with a few pillows
- Do not wear stockings/socks that have tight bands of elastic around the legs
- If you sit a lot on the job, stand up and move around from time to time
- Try not to stand still for long periods of time

## **Is it normal for my gums to bleed?**

Extra hormones during pregnancy may cause your gums to swell and bleed. Floss and brush regularly using a soft toothbrush and keep your teeth in good shape. Having a dental checkup in early pregnancy is a good idea to be sure your mouth is healthy. Local anesthesia, if needed, does not pose a risk during pregnancy. Dental x-rays should only be done if necessary and with an abdominal shield.

## **Are herbs and extra vitamins safe in pregnancy?**

No, your prenatal vitamins should be the only supplement used during pregnancy unless your doctor specifically directs you to use an additional product.

## **Is intercourse safe in pregnancy?**

Some people worry about having intercourse during pregnancy fearing it will cause miscarriage. For a healthy woman with a normal pregnancy, intercourse is safe even into the last weeks of pregnancy. For your comfort, you and your partner may want to try different positions. The doctor may advise you to limit or avoid intercourse if there are signs of problems in your pregnancy.