



NAUSEA AND VOMITING IN PREGNANCY

Over half of all pregnant women experience some degree of nausea or vomiting. The cause of this pregnancy-related nausea and vomiting remains unclear, but the increased hormones of pregnancy probably are a factor. It usually begins five to six weeks after the last menstrual period and starts to improve between ten and twelve weeks of pregnancy. It is common for nausea to be most severe in the morning, but many women experience their symptoms at other times of the day. If vomiting is severe enough to result in dehydration, it is called hyperemesis gravidarum or simply hyperemesis. Fortunately, nausea and vomiting that causes weight loss and dehydration are rare.

FOODS TO TRY:

- Small frequent snacks.
- Take your prenatal vitamins at night.
- Chewable vitamins with folate instead of your regular prenatal vitamin.
- Sports drinks, such as Gatorade.
- Ginger products, i.e., tart ginger ale, pickled ginger preserves. Concentrated ginger capsules should be avoided.
- Atypical food/beverages, such as potato chips, lemonade, lemons (to smell), and Granny Smith apples.
- Consumables with “built-in” fluid should be considered, such as watermelon and ice chips, both of which provide a half cup of fluid per cup consumed.
- Fresh lemon juice and water mouth rinses.
- Sucking on Atomic Fireball candies, or other hard candies.
- Avoid drinking large amounts of water.
- Try juices and flat pop, which are more easily digested.

A woman should try whatever appeals to her in an aroma-free, quiet environment. There is no studied food that suppresses the natural course of morning sickness. Craved foods should be eaten immediately or the window of opportunity may be lost.

THINGS TO TRY

- The Internet has web sites with information and shared experiences on morning sickness.
- Home help for procuring meals (but not for cooking aromatic foods in the home) and child care (including diaper changing).
- Grocery delivery services.
- Symptom monitoring. Plotting daily events can provide an overview of potential triggers.
- Air conditioning. Hot, humid weather exacerbates symptoms.
- Warm dressing in cold weather. Relying on artificial heaters can accelerate fluid loss, exacerbating dehydration and constipation.
- Unisom tablets (Doxylamine succinate 25 mg) and vitamin B6 25 mg tablet taken together at bedtime. This may be repeated in the morning if needed.

THINGS TO AVOID

- Odor sources, such as food, pet products, gas stations, coffee pots, diapers.
- Travel and public entertainment. Air travel is particularly unpredictable due to air turbulence, perfume/cologne odors, and food smells. If travel is unavoidable, a lemon, carried in a resealable plastic bag, may be helpful when trigger smells are encountered.

Additional prescription medications and IV fluids may be needed if the above is not helpful.

Please call the office if:

1. You have been unable to keep any food or liquids down for over 24 hours.
2. If you feel dizzy or lightheaded.