

Sun City Women's Health Care

Common Complaints

NAUSEA / VOMITING DIET

During early pregnancy, nausea and vomiting are common. It is usually referred to as "Morning Sickness" but it can happen at any time of the day and can last all day. Sometimes it lasts throughout the entire pregnancy. Here are a few suggestions for coping with this problem.

- Eat cracker, dry toast, or a handful of dry cereal when you first wake up. Then rest in bed for a while.
- Have plenty of fresh air in the room when you sleep.
- Get out of bed slowly.
- Drink liquids between meals, not with them. Avoid drinks with caffeine.
- Eat small frequent meals such as a small sandwich, then 2 hours later a glass of juice, 2 hours later a fruit or salad.
- Eat a bedtime snack. Leave another snack at the bedside to eat before rising. Saltine or Graham crackers are your best snack choices.
- Avoid fried or fatty food, highly spiced food, or foods with strong odors.

If you continue to have extreme nausea or vomiting after trying this diet for 1 – 2 days and nothing stays down, call the office. If you are feeling very ill, you may go to the emergency room. Luckily, this symptom does not usually last longer than the 3rd or 4th month of pregnancy.

COLD AND FLU

- Unfortunately, there still is no cure for the common cold or flu virus. Pregnant women are just as likely to come down with a cold as anyone else. You still treat the symptoms for relief, just as if you were not pregnant, with few exceptions. If you have concerns about any medicine you are considering taking, call the office for advice. You can also talk to your pharmacist at the time of purchase.
- For cold / Flu, you may take:
- Chlor-Trimeton, Sudafed, Actifed, Dimetapp, Robitussin, Benadryl (plain) – These help to clear nasal and sinus passages and to reduce swollen nasal and sinus tissues.
- Try using a humidifier in the room. Or you can try saline nasal drops. You can buy the drops over the counter or make them by mixing 1/8 tsp salt with ½ cup water.
- Robitussin DM Cough Syrup – This is an expectorant to help loosen mucus in bronchial passageways. It also contains a cough suppressant to help alleviate dry hacking coughs.
- Tylenol – You may take up to 650mg of Tylenol (2 regular strength tablets) every 6 hours if you are suffering from aches and fevers. If Tylenol does not relieve the fever, you should call the office.
- Try using a humidifier in the room.
- DO NOT TAKE – Aspirin, Bufferin, Excedrin, Alka-Seltzer, or any other Aspirin containing drug.
- Rest, drink lots of fluids, and eat soups.

HEARTBURN

- Eat small low fat meals and snacks. Avoid spicy foods and greasy or fried foods. Avoid overeating. Try smaller, more frequent meals.
- Don't bend over or lie down for 1 to 2 hours after eating.
- Avoid soft drinks and drinks with caffeine.
- Wear clothes that are loose around the waist.
- You may take Tums Antacids (up to 5 per day, no more than 3 at a time), Mylanta, and Maalox as directed.

LOW BACK PAIN

- Maintain good posture. When picking up objects, squat, do not bend at the back. Always use your legs to lift yourself. Try and keep your back straight when walking and sitting.
- There are many brands and styles of maternity belts. Some of my patients say they do help. You can usually buy / order these at the maternity clothing store.
- **Never wear high heels.** Wearing flats will decrease your back pain and decrease risk of ankle injury. Wearing high heels during pregnancy is very risky.
- Sleep on a firm mattress, on your side, with a pillow between you knees and arms.

CONSTIPATION

- Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water every day.
- Eat whole-grain breads and cereals, and brown rice.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Eat dried fruit like prunes, apricots and raisins, or drink prune juice.
- Get plenty of exercise. Walking is best.
- Never take a laxative or home remedy for constipation without a doctor's approval.

HEMORRHOIDS

- Follow all of the steps to prevent constipation.
- Relax in a tub of warm water daily once you have completed your first trimester.
- You can use over the counter medications such as Witch Hazel (Tucks Pads) up to 6 times a day. Or, Preparation-H as directed.
- If no relief call Sun City Women's Healthcare for further advice / treatment.

VARICOSE VEINS

- Wear support hose (maternity size). Put them on before getting out of bed.
- Don't wear knee high hose.
- Don't cross you legs.
- Sit or lie down with you legs elevated as often as possible.
- Walking is good exercise and is very helpful in patients with varicose veins.

ROUND LIGAMENT PAIN

The ligaments that are attached to your uterus will stretch as the uterus enlarges with your pregnancy. This will cause pain. It will most likely begin as pain in the right and / or left lower abdominal area (groin) and is usually made worse with activity such as walking. It will eventually present as pain in the vagina, often described as "stabbing" pains.

- Lie on your side with knees pulled up or with a pillow under abdomen to support it. If this position doesn't help try other positions until you find one that relieves the pain.
- Take a warm bath.
- When getting out of bed, roll to your side, then push yourself up with your hands.
- No heavy lifting.

STRETCH MARKS

During your pregnancy you will most likely see purple or red lines developing on the abdomen, breasts, buttocks and legs.

I wish I had good news for you here but I don't. Those people who are genetically prone to getting stretch marks will get them no matter what you do. You are more than welcome to buy creams and salves to apply to your skin as long as the ingredients in those creams will not harm the baby (some of the chemicals will cross through the skin and get in your blood and go to the baby). Lotions and oils sold over the counter in the U.S. are very helpful in moisturizing the skin. This will decrease the itching but it will not decrease the stretch marks. There is surgical therapy later on after you have finished your childbearing if you wish. These marks almost always fade with time after you deliver and are much less noticeable.

OTHER NOTICEABLE CHANGES

You will frequently develop dark "blotches" to the skin of your face "the Mask of Pregnancy". You will notice the hair on your abdomen becoming darker and more noticeable. You will develop a dark line in the middle of your abdomen beginning at your pubic hair and eventually extending above the belly button to the bottom of your breastbone. You will also notice your nipples becoming much darker. Your nipples will most likely stay dark for the rest of your life. The other changes will most likely completely resolve shortly after delivery. Your breasts will grow and usually become more sensitive. You will most likely need to buy a larger sized bra before the pregnancy is over to compensate for their larger size and to alleviate the discomfort.

About a million other things can happen to you during the pregnancy. If you have any questions or concerns, bring them up at our visits and we can discuss them.