

When Pregnancy and Food Do Not Agree . . . Dealing With Morning Sickness

Over half of all pregnant women have some nausea and vomiting during their pregnancy. It usually goes away by the time a woman is in her fourth month (around 15 weeks pregnant). It can happen any time of day, especially on an empty stomach. It can be related to changes in hormones or blood sugar levels, an increased sense of smell, changes in blood pressure, increases in saliva production, anxiety, and stress. Usually nausea and vomiting can be controlled with changes in diet, timing of meals, and sometimes medications. If it continues, it may affect the baby's growth and development, as well as, cause the woman to be put in the hospital because of further dehydration. Listed below are some things that can be tried to reduce or stop the morning sickness.

- **If vomiting increases and you cannot keep solids or liquids down, call your doctor that day. Do not wait several days before you call !!!**
- Eat 5-6 small meals each day to avoid an empty stomach and to keep your blood sugar from dropping.
- If you are sick first thing in the morning, eat a few crackers, dry cereal, or dry bread about 15-30 minutes before getting out of bed. Have someone bring it to you, or lay it beside your bed the night before.
- Move slowly when you get out of bed in the morning.
- Lie down or sit quietly when you feel sick.
- Eat foods that are easy to digest, such as noodles, rice, bread, crackers, fruit, and vegetables.
- Try salty foods, such as potato chips, crackers, and pretzels.
- Drink caffeine-free beverages.
- If cooked food odors bother you, cook with open windows or use an exhaust fan, also try eating sandwiches or salads.
- Suck on hard candies (butterscotch, lemon drops, and assorted flavors) or drink tart drinks (lemonade) to help reduce extra saliva.
- Avoid fluids for 30 minutes after meals and avoid a lot of fluids early in the morning. But, be sure to get 8-10 glasses of fluid every day.
- Try to drink something every 1- 2 hours to keep from getting dehydrated.
- Avoid greasy, fried, and high-fat foods. Fat takes longer to empty from your stomach.
- Avoid highly seasoned foods, such as pizza, tacos, peppers, chili, and foods with a lot of garlic.
- Avoid strong odors, such as perfumes, coffee, garlic, bacon, cabbage, fried foods, and bad breath.
- Rest after you eat, with your head and chest propped up. Do not lie flat on one pillow.
- Take prenatal vitamins, iron pills, or children's chewable multivitamins at night or with food rather than on an empty stomach.
- Use mouthwash and brush your teeth several times each day.
- Use motion sickness wristbands (Sea Bands).
- Practice breathing and relaxation methods.
- Smell fresh, clean smells, such as lemons.