

Nausea & Vomiting in Pregnancy

Step One - Diet

- Foods high in protein and carbs like apples, peanut butter, nuts, ginger, rice, potatoes, toast, plain Lay's chips or noodles. Some women find dairy products like yogurt helpful. Also try gelatin, broths, and ginger ale.
- Drinking small amounts of fluid all throughout the day. This prevents dehydration and may lessen your nausea. Try drinking fluids (especially water) about 30 min. before or after a meal instead of with a meal. Cold drinks may be better tolerated than hot drinks.
- Adding in some electrolytes if you have been vomiting (gatorade, pedialyte). Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink as thirst is a late sign of dehydration.
- Eating small meals every 2-3 hours. Eat a small snack at bedtime and when getting up to go to the bathroom at night. An empty stomach may increase your nausea.
- Eating something like plain crackers, toast or cereal in the morning. Some women find it helps to eat something before getting out of bed.
- Keeping air flowing through rooms to reduce odors.

Step Two - Natural Remedies

- **Ginger**
This has been used for nausea for centuries. All forms of ginger are considered safe in pregnancy and the recommended maximum dose per day is 1 gram. Available forms of ginger include:
 - Ginger Root Tea
 - Ginger Gum or candy
 - Ginger snaps
 - Ginger syrup added to water
 - Ginger ale
 - Ginger cookies
- **Acupressure Beads**
Seabands are wristbands with a pressure point placed on the inside of your wrist. These are often used for motion sickness but some women find them helpful for nausea in pregnancy. Acupuncture may also be helpful but make sure the practitioner is qualified to work with pregnant women.

Step Three - Medication

Over-The-Counter Medication
Multiple randomized trials offer evidence that the combination of Vitamin B6 & Unisom (doxylamine) can reduce nausea and vomiting by up to 70%. This should be discussed with your provider first.

Dosing recommendations:
Vitamin B6 25mg orally up to 2-3 times per day (morning, afternoon, evening) in addition to Unisom 25mg at bedtime, or 12.5mg in the morning & 12.5mg in the evening. Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine) is available in several forms: tablets, melts or gummies. Drowsiness is a known side effect of Unisom.

*Some Unisom formulations, the active ingredient is diphenhydramine (not doxylamine). Double check active ingredients to be sure.

Prescription Medications
If your nausea is continuing after trying Step One, Step Two and the above OTC medication combinations, or you are vomiting frequently or have any warning signs previously mentioned, you may need prescription medication. There are several that have been studied and that have been shown safe during pregnancy.

TRY

AVOID

Foods with strong odors, are fried, spicy or very hot. Also avoid foods high in fat and salt, but low in nutrition.

Laying down after eating. Wait at least 30 minutes.

If your prenatal vitamin is making your nausea worse, you can either try taking it at night with food, or stopping it completely. Instead you can try a vitamin with less iron (this is often the cause of the increased nausea), a children's vitamin with folic acid, or just a folic acid tablet that contains 0.4mg (400mcg) of folic acid.

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Is nausea & vomiting common?

- 1 in 4 pregnant women have only mild nausea. 3 out of every 10 will have nausea that is bad enough to interfere with daily living. Nearly half of all women with nausea will have both nausea and vomiting at some point in early pregnancy.
- Nausea and vomiting tends to peak about 8-10 weeks after your last menstrual period and usually goes away by 12 to 16 weeks after your last menstrual period.
- Though it is often known as “morning sickness”, nausea and vomiting can occur anytime in the day or night and may occur all day long.
- The exact cause is unknown, however, hormones are thought to play a major role.
- Factors that increase your risk of experiencing nausea and or vomiting in pregnancy:
 - If your mom had severe nausea and vomiting in pregnancy.
 - If you are prone to motion sickness or car sickness.
 - If you are dehydrated or if you have low blood sugar.

Should I be worried?

Mild nausea and vomiting are not cause for concern and will not harm your baby. However, if you are experiencing severe symptoms that stop you from keeping down any food or fluids, you should be seen as soon as possible to prevent health complications.

Warning signs include:

- Inability to keep any liquid or food down for 24 hours.
- You are vomiting several times a day or after every meal.
- You have abdominal pain, difficulty urinating, or a fever.
- You do not urinate as often as usual or your urine is dark in color.
- You are weak, dizzy or faint when you stand up.
- You do not gain weight, or you lose weight in a week.
- You vomit blood or material that looks like coffee grounds (call immediately!).

What will help me feel better?

Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy can be approached in **three steps**: simple lifestyle and dietary changes, natural remedies, and medication.

STEP ONE: Changing what you eat and when you eat may be all that is needed to help you feel better and prevent vomiting.

STEP TWO: Natural Remedies.

STEP THREE: Medications - there are both over-the-counter and prescription medications for nausea that are safe to use and may help.

*See back page for more information