Managing Morning Sickness

About morning sickness

- Morning sickness is a nauseated feeling during pregnancy. It may or may not include vomiting.
- More than half of all pregnant women have morning sickness.
- It usually begins in the first month of pregnancy and stops around the third or fourth month.
- It may be worse in the morning. Or it may last all day long or happen at night.
- No one knows for sure what causes it. It may be related to changing hormone levels.
- It is more common and can be worse in women carrying twins or triplets.
- Mild morning sickness is not harmful to you or your baby. But talk with your doctor right away if you have severe nausea or vomiting and can’t keep any food down. This can cause dehydration and malnutrition.
- DO NOT take any medicine for morning sickness until you talk with your doctor.

Ways to ease morning sickness

The tips below have helped many women with morning sickness. Check those you would like to try.

☑ For morning nausea, eat a small snack, such as a few crackers or dry toast, as soon as you wake up. Wait about 15 minutes, and then get out of bed slowly.

☑ For nausea during the day, avoid getting too full or too hungry. Eat several small meals instead of three large meals.

☑ Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day, but not with meals. Drink fluids ½ hour before or after meals. Beware of dehydration. Signs include thirst, dry mouth, headache, less urine than usual, and dizziness.

☑ Avoid foods that make you nauseous, such as spicy or fatty foods.

☑ Do cooking odors bother you? Turn on fans when you cook. Or ask someone else to cook for you. Try eating foods cold or at room temperature. Hot foods tend to have stronger smells.

☑ Get plenty of rest. Nap during the day if you can, but not right after a meal.

☑ Stay cool. Feeling hot adds to nausea.

☑ Certain foods tend to ease nausea. Examples are lemons, lemonade, ginger, ginger ale, ginger tea (grated ginger in hot water), peppermint tea, and popsicles.

☑ Acupressure wrist bands may help. You can find them in drug, health food, and travel or boating stores.

☑ Acupuncture may help. Talk with your doctor and look for an acupuncturist who is trained to work with pregnant women.

Talk with your doctor if none of the above methods help. There are certain vitamins and medicines that can be prescribed if needed. Do not take any medicines without your doctor’s okay.

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Call your doctor if:

- You vomit more than three times a day.
- You can’t keep anything down, including fluids, for 24 hours or more.
- Your urine is dark and strong smelling, and you’re urinating less often than every 4-6 hours.
- You have a fever, pain, or both.
- You vomit blood, which may appear red or black like coffee grounds. Call right away.
- Your nausea and vomiting lasts beyond the fourth month of pregnancy.

Take Action

Choose one or two of the tips for easing morning sickness that you checked above. Make a plan below for putting them into action. Be specific.

For example, “I will buy crackers on Wednesday and keep them by my bedside. I will eat a few crackers 15 minutes before I get out of bed. I will also buy peppermint tea for a midmorning drink.”

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