Managing Common Pregnancy Symptoms

TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM

Morning Sickness or Nausea

One of the most common pregnancy symptoms! It is important to remember that, for most people, nausea is only temporary.

Here are some tips to get you through:

- **Eat smaller meals more frequently** throughout the day.
- Take **prenatal vitamins with food,** or try taking them at night.
- Try eating **cold foods;** strong smells can enhance nausea.
- Try adding **sour foods** to your meals like lemon, vinegar, or pickles.
- **Include ginger**: ginger tea, fresh slices of ginger in hot water, grated ginger in curries and stir-fries, or ginger chews (made with real ginger).
- **Prioritize fluids**, especially if you are vomiting regularly. Sip throughout the day. Along with water, try coconut water, infused water (with fruit, herbs, cucumbers), smoothies/protein shakes, soup or bone broth, milk, low-caffeine tea, and water-rich fruits and veggies like melons, oranges, celery, and tomatoes.
- **Vitamin B6** has been shown to reduce nausea in pregnancy. Start by increasing foods high in B6 like sweet potatoes/potatoes, bananas, mangos, pistachios, avocados, and chicken.
- **Manage blood sugar**: Studies have shown that blood sugar levels may be linked to pregnancy morning sickness. Including protein in your meals can help stabilize blood sugar and ease symptoms. Aim to include a source of protein — such as eggs, chicken, fish, tofu, milk, yogurt, or protein powder — with every meal, especially breakfast.
- **Limit fried food or high fat meals**. Fat is slow to digest and can linger in your digestive tract longer, adding to feelings of nausea.

Nausea can happen at any stage of pregnancy, but it is more common in the first trimester. Remember, calorie needs don't increase until the second trimester. You body will prioritize baby's nutritional needs. Relax and eat what you can — some calories are better than none. Talk to your doctor if symptoms continue into the second trimester.

Anti-Nausea Smoothie

- **1 large handful of spinach (or 1/4 cup frozen spinach)**
- **1 banana (fresh or frozen)**
- **¼ cup pistachios (or spoonful of almond butter)**
- **1 serving of protein (3/4 cup plain Greek yogurt, or ½ cup tofu, or 1 scoop protein powder)**
- **1 cup of liquid (water, coconut water, milk)**
- **6 ice cubes**

Place all ingredients in blender and mix until smooth. Enjoy! This makes a great meal replacement if you don't feel like eating and it's packed with vitamin B6 to decrease nausea.

Fresh Ginger Tea

- **4 quarter-sized slices of fresh ginger**
- **½ lemon**
- **1-2 teaspoons honey (optional)**
- **pinch of salt**

Place all ingredients in your favorite mug. Pour hot water over and let steep for 5 minutes. Enjoy!

Recommended Electrolyte Drinks

- Skratch Labs Hydration Everyday
- Tailwind Rapid Hydration
- Liquid IV (stevia)
- Recharge (sugar)
- Ultima (stevia)
- Nuun Sport (stevia)

Note:

- Avoid high sodium - aim for 200-400mg/serving
- Added sugars or sweeteners are not needed for hydration, but for activity longer than 60 minutes you may want sugar for fuel (like in Recharge).

Hormone changes during pregnancy can slow digestion.

- **Good news:** During pregnancy, our bodies absorb more nutrients from the same foods compared to when we are not pregnant — this means more nutrients for building baby!
- **Bad news:** Slower digestion can result in symptoms like nausea, heartburn, and constipation. Hopefully, these tips and tricks can support you through these uncomfortable symptoms.

Although antacids are safe during pregnancy, it's best to not overdo it. If you find you are relying on antacids regularly, try the tips on the right. You may also consider trying digestive enzymes. Talk to your dietitian for safe recommendations.

Tips to Reduce Heartburn

1. **Milk:** Try a glass of milk or yogurt after dinner. Calcium can help with heartburn. Try soy milk or almond milk fortified with calcium if you avoid dairy.
2. **Herbal Teas:** Try ginger, green tea, or chamomile.
3. **Small frequent meals:** Avoid large meals which can take longer to digest and lead to reflux. Aim for 4-6 mini-meals instead of 2-3 large meals.
4. **Take a walk after meals,** not intense exercise, but a nice stroll or dog walk.
5. **Drink most water between meals**. Don't gulp fluids during meals.
6. **Sit up straight during and after meals**, avoid lying down for at least 30 minutes after meals.
7. **Create a pause before meal times to be in a relaxed state.** Say a blessing or list 3 things you are grateful for. Sit while eating (instead of standing at the counter), remove distractions like screens, slow down meals and chew food well (10-20 chews per bite depending on the texture). These can get your body in a better state for proper digestion.

Constipation: Nutrients & Foods to Help

Fiber

"Bones of a Plant" helps food move through your digestive tract. Try increasing some of these high fiber foods to keep things moving: **lentils, kiwis, berries, Brussels sprouts, beans, cauliflower, whole wheat bread or pasta, nuts, and dried fruit** (like prunes or raisins)

Fluids

Even being slightly dehydrated can increase risk of constipation. **Aim for 8-10 glasses (about 3 liters)** of water throughout the day. Along with water, other liquids can count too — like **sparkling water, broth or soup, smoothies, tea, decaf coffee, and even high–water–content fruits and vegetables** (such as melons, citrus, grapes, tomatoes, and celery).

Magnesium

Low magnesium intake is associated with constipation. Before turning to supplements, try increasing foods high in magnesium like **spinach or any leafy greens, pumpkin seeds, edamame, almonds, avocados, bananas, and beans.**

Iron supplements can contribute to constipation. Talk to your provider for ideas on how to meet iron needs and reduce constipation.

PSYLLIUM HUSK FIBER:
This plant fiber is very effective in relieving constipation. It is available in powder or capsule form. Mix the powder into smoothies, oatmeal, or yogurt. Start with 1 teaspoon per day and slowly increase to 1 tablespoon as tolerated.

For information on Baby & Me programs offered by Tahoe Forest Wellness, call (530) 587-3769 or visit TFHD.com/baby-me.