



## COMMON DISCOMFORTS OF PREGNANCY

Nausea	See handout on morning sickness.
Constipation	Regular exercise. Drink 6-8 oz of non-caffeinated beverages every 1-2 hrs while awake. Increase fiber in your diet: Whole grain breads and cereals, fresh fruits and vegetables
Hemorrhoids	Avoid constipation and straining with bowel movements. Try Witch Hazel wipes, tucks, warm soaks, Preparation H.
Heartburn	Eat smaller, lighter meals more frequently. Avoid fatty, spicy foods and drinks with caffeine. Do not lie flat for 1-2 hrs after eating. Try drinking chamomile tea.
Varicose veins	Avoid wearing stocking with elastic bands. Support hose of nylons may help. Don't sit or stand in the same position for more than one hour at a time. Do not cross your legs. Lie down to rest occasionally and put your feet up. Walking and exercising may help.
Backache	Maintain good posture. Avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time. Use a footstool under your feet when sitting. Wear low-heeled, comfortable shoes. Massage or heat may relieve pain. Try pelvic tilt exercises and prenatal yoga. No heavy lifting – Use good body mechanics when you lift anything: squat down and use your legs to lift, do not bend at the waist.
Fatigue	Rest during the day with legs raised. Take an afternoon nap whenever possible. Eat a nutritious diet, high in protein, fruit, vegetables and whole grains, low in sugar and processed foods. Take prenatal vitamins.
Swelling of ankles & feet	Exercise, especially walking, helps. Keep legs raised when sitting. Do not stand or sit for long periods of time – if sitting get up and move around every hour. Do not cross your legs. Decrease your salt intake and increase the amount of water you drink during the day.
Leg cramps	Stay well hydrated. Take a walk every day. Avoid getting too tired. Eat a diet high in calcium and magnesium and talk to your provider about taking a magnesium supplement. Stretch your calf muscles regularly during the day and several times before you go to bed. Avoid standing or sitting with your legs crossed for long periods of time.
Broad and round ligament pain	Feels like sharp twinges/muscle pull usually on the right or left side of lower uterus. Treat with heat and Tylenol. Support your abdomen with pillows when side-lying.
Itching	Stay well hydrated. Avoid perfumed soaps and lotions. Try changing your soap or using less. Blot your skin dry with a towel rather than rubbing. Take warm baths with baking soda.
Vaginal discharge	Wear cotton or cotton-lined underwear and change them as needed. DO NOT douche during pregnancy. If discharge is accompanied by a bad odor, itching or irritation, talk to your provider.
Eye irritation or changes	Try wearing glasses instead of contacts. The shape of your eyes may change due to hormones and increased fluids in your body.
Bleeding gums	See a dentist as soon as possible. Brush gently with a softer toothbrush and floss daily. Eat foods high in vitamin C such as fruits and vegetables.