



Morning sickness

What is it? Morning sickness is the nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (throwing up) that may happen during pregnancy. It is most common during the first 3-4 months of pregnancy. Most pregnant women have at least mild morning sickness. Although morning sickness is unpleasant, it is harmless, unless severe vomiting develops. The nausea and vomiting is often gone in the second half of pregnancy.

Causes: It is not known why pregnant women have morning sickness. Changes in your hormones and blood sugar may cause the nausea and vomiting. Most women notice it most when their stomach gets empty (for instance, first thing in the morning when you haven't eaten all night). Stress and nerves may make morning sickness worse.

Signs and Symptoms: For many women nausea and vomiting happens in the morning, often when you first wake up. But morning sickness can happen at any time. If you are vomiting too much it is easy to get dehydrated (low on body fluids). Dizziness, urinating less with urine that is darker yellow, dry mouth and cracked lips may be other signs of dehydration.

Care: *These things can help your nausea and vomiting:*

- ✓ Keep crackers by your bedside. Eat a few of them or a slice of bread before getting out of bed.
- ✓ Eat small amounts of food high in protein, such as cheese or peanut butter. Avoid greasy, fried or spicy foods. Try to eat a cracker every hour and a larger snack every 2-3 hrs, even if you are not hungry.
- ✓ Sit straight up after eating. This will keep food from backing up and causing nausea or vomiting.
- ✓ Have a snack such as yogurt, milk, bread, dry cereal or a small sandwich before going to bed. You may need to eat during the night. This may keep you from being nauseated in the morning.
- ✓ The smell of some foods may make you feel nauseated. Stay away from these foods.
- ✓ Get out of bed slowly. Sudden movements could cause you to get dizzy and nauseated.
- ✓ Drink 8-10 eight ounce glasses of fluids each day. Clear broth, fruit juices, caffeine-free drinks and water and good to have. Drink them slowly and between meals.
- ✓ Do not brush your teeth right after eating, as this can cause nausea.
- ✓ Keep your feet up and your head slightly raised on a pillow when resting.
- ✓ Getting fresh air helps you feel better. Take a short walk or try to sleep with the window open. When you are cooking, open windows to get rid of smells.
- ✓ Do not smoke cigarettes. Ask other people not to smoke around you.
- ✓ Ginger helps settle some peoples' stomachs. You can drink it as tea or eat ginger "chews" or in capsules (250 mg 4 times a day) and vitamin B6 (pyridoxine 25mg 2 or 3 times a day)
- ✓ Motion sickness wrist bands work on the principles of acupressure. They are soft elastic bracelets worn on a specific location on both wrists.
- ✓ Do not take over-the-counter medications such as Peptobismol.



Call your physician if:

- None of the above ideas help.
- You are throwing up more than 3-4 times a day.
- You begin to lose weight.
- You are throwing up blood or liquid that looks like coffee grounds.

Seek care immediately if:

- You have pain in your abdomen.
- You develop a fever.
- You get a bad headache.
- You have changes in your vision.

