

## Nausea and vomiting

Perhaps the most challenging part of early pregnancy for many women is nausea and vomiting. Mild nausea and vomiting is a normal part of pregnancy. It usually starts around the sixth week of pregnancy and eases up by the 12<sup>th</sup> week. For some women it persists throughout pregnancy. While it can be very unpleasant, the good news is that mild nausea and vomiting is not harmful to you or your unborn child. There are many ways of easing your nausea and vomiting. Here are a few tips for managing nausea and vomiting that many women find helpful:

- Avoid smells that bother you.
- Sniffing lemons or ginger can sometimes help.
- Try to get enough rest as nausea is worse when you are tired.
- Eat whatever pregnancy-safe food appeals to you when you are hungry.
- Some women find eating a few dry crackers first helps.
- You may find it helps to get up slowly and not to lie down too soon after eating.
- Eat small meals or snacks often so your stomach doesn't get empty.
- Don't skip meals.
- Eating some salty potato chips can help settle the stomach enough to eat a meal.
- Sip small amounts of fluids often to avoid getting dehydrated.
- Acupressure helps some women and you may find it works for you.
- Try temporarily substituting iron-containing vitamins for folic acid or vitamins that are low in iron.
- Practice mindfulness techniques or talk with your health care provider about seeking mindfulness-based cognitive therapy.
- Try pharmaceutical grade ginger (**Gravol® Natural Source® Ginger**) at a minimum of 250 mg four times a day.



For persistent nausea and vomiting, try vitamin B6 (pyridoxine), 25 mg three times daily, or Diclectin, a specific medication for pregnancy, which is a combination of vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) and doxylamine that your health care provider can prescribe for you. It has been safely used for decades and is approved by Health Canada for use in pregnancy. There is no evidence that cannabis helps relieve nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, but there is evidence that cannabis use during pregnancy can lead to poor outcomes and harmful long-term effects on your child's development.



It is not normal to have nausea and vomiting so severe that you are missing meals, having trouble getting through normal activities, or are losing weight. If this is the case, see your health care provider. There are other treatments that they can offer. Other safe and approved medications include dimenhydrinate (Gravol), metoclopramide, and phenothiazines. If none of the available treatments help, it is important to consider other potential medical causes. If you are using cannabis during your pregnancy, inform your health care provider, as long-term cannabis use can cause periods of repeated and severe vomiting, which may mimic the symptoms of severe morning sickness.



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