

## Coping with Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

Nausea and vomiting are two common complaints of early pregnancy. The exact cause is unknown, but many factors add to this problem. Increased hormones affect areas in the brain that deal with nausea and vomiting. Other factors may be low blood sugar and the effect of pregnancy hormones on stomach emptying. While it is a hard part of early pregnancy, it is a sign that your body is going through some normal changes.

### Helpful Tips

- Eat small amounts of food every 2-3 hours.
  - Eat low fat, high protein foods (lean meat, skinless poultry, eggs, broiled or boiled fish, mozzarella, or string cheese) and carbohydrates that are easy to digest (fruit, fruit juices, rice, pasta, potatoes, dry cereals, toast, or crackers). This will help avoid low blood sugar.
  - Drink liquids between meals rather than with meals.
  - Avoid milk or use it in small amounts.
  - Eat lightly seasoned foods, salt to taste.
  - Sit upright after meals to lessen gastric reflux.
  - Have a snack before going to bed.
  - Before getting out of bed in the morning eat a piece of bread, a few crackers, some cheese, or nuts.
  - Get out of bed slowly and avoid sudden movements.
  - Slowly sip a carbonated drink or water.
  - Open windows or use an exhaust fan to get rid of odors.
- Drink ginger root and peppermint teas. Avoid chamomile and green teas.
  - Take ginger capsules 4 times a day.
  - Take vitamin B6 25-50 mg three times a day and Unisom® 12.5 mg at bedtime. Unisom® makes two sleep aids and we want you to take doxylamine not diphenhydramine.
  - You may add Unisom® 12.5 mg during the morning or evening. Be careful about driving as it may make you sleepy.
  - Take prenatal vitamins at dinner or not at all for a short time if they make your nausea worse. Check with your doctor or midwife before stopping them.
  - You may tolerate chewable prenatal gummies or Flintstones™ complete better when you have nausea.
  - Take papaya enzyme, a natural aid, to help digest food.
  - Sea Bands can be helpful. You wear these on the wrist and apply pressure on a point on the underside of the wrist.
  - Try a BRAT diet (bananas, rice, applesauce, toast).

### When to Call

If your nausea persists and becomes intolerable or if you have not been able to eat or drink for 24 hours, call your clinic for more direction. You may be at risk for dehydration, weight loss, and poor nutrition. We can give you prescription medicines to help you feel better.