

## Managing morning sickness

### About morning sickness

- Nausea and vomiting is very common during pregnancy. For most people, it starts in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and eases by 20 weeks.
- Morning sickness may affect you at any time of the day, not only in the morning. This can make it hard to follow a balanced diet.
- There are some medications that can help manage morning sickness and allow you to eat well. These include vitamin supplements (vitamin B6) and ginger tablets. It is important to discuss these with your doctor, especially if morning sickness is making it difficult to eat or drink.

### Tips to manage morning sickness

- Eat small, frequent meals – skipping meals can make nausea worse.
- It is important to stay hydrated by sipping fluids between meals. Drinking fluids with meals may fill you up and make it difficult to eat.
- Avoid drinks that are too cold. Caffeine-containing drinks like tea, coffee, softdrinks and energy drinks should also be avoided.
- Choose a time when you feel well to eat. This may be 20 to 30 minutes after taking anti-nausea medication.
- Choose room temperature or cold foods without strong smells. Remember to avoid foods that are high risk of Listeria in pregnancy. These include deli meats, smoked seafood, soft cheeses and leftovers that are cold or more than 24 hours old.
- Iron supplements or iron in your pregnancy multivitamin may upset your stomach. Speak with your Doctor or Dietitian about this before changing your supplement.
- Avoid smoking. This can make nausea worse and is harmful for you and your baby's health.
- You may lose a small amount of weight because you can't eat very much. Don't be too concerned as this weight will usually return. If you are unable to gain a healthy amount of weight or eat a balanced diet, speak to your Doctor, Midwife or Dietitian.

**This table lists some ideas to try if you suffer from morning sickness**

Strategy	Examples to try
Sip clear fluids between meals	<input type="checkbox"/> Flat lemonade or ginger ale <input type="checkbox"/> Sports drinks, cordial, sweet jelly <input type="checkbox"/> High protein supplements like Forti juice or Resource Fruit Beverage (your Dietitian can prescribe these)
When feeling a little better, increase the variety of drinks	<input type="checkbox"/> Dilute fruit & vegetable juices with water <input type="checkbox"/> Weak tea & soda water <input type="checkbox"/> Bonox, clear soups & broths
Eat small, frequent meals	<input type="checkbox"/> Eat/drink slowly & chew foods well <input type="checkbox"/> Rest after mealtimes but avoid lying down
Choose plain starchy foods	<input type="checkbox"/> Plain, dry crackers or popcorn <input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal <input type="checkbox"/> Toast +/- spreads <input type="checkbox"/> Plain, boiled rice or pasta <input type="checkbox"/> Plain fruit & starchy vegetables like potato
Avoid high fat, fried or spicy foods	<input type="checkbox"/> Use low-fat dairy foods <input type="checkbox"/> Limit butter, margarine, oils <input type="checkbox"/> Choose lean cuts of meat like skinless chicken, trimmed steak.
Try to include some low-fat, protein rich foods	<input type="checkbox"/> Plain lean meat, chicken or fish <input type="checkbox"/> Cooked eggs or baked beans or tofu <input type="checkbox"/> Your dietitian may prescribe meal replacement drinks like Sustagen or Ensure if you aren't able to eat enough or gain enough weight.
Try to eat something plain as soon as you wake in the morning	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep a jar of plain dry biscuits by your bed or a slice of toast
Before bed, have a snack that contains protein and carbohydrate	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheese & crackers, fruit & yoghurt, custard, glass of milk
Keep your mouth fresh	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice-blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Barley sugars, boiled sweets
Try Ginger as it may settle nausea	<input type="checkbox"/> Ginger tea or lollies, ginger jam, ginger syrup, flat ginger ale

## **Hyperemesis**

Hyperemesis is severe, prolonged vomiting. This affects a small number of pregnant women. If not treated, it can lead to dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, weight loss and affect the baby's growth. It is important to see your Doctor if your nausea and vomiting is severe.

### **How is hyperemesis treated?**

- Regular medications help relieve nausea and vomiting. It is important to take these as recommended by your Doctor.
- Drink enough fluid to keep hydrated. Eat whatever you can keep down.
- If you are unable to eat or drink enough, you may need to come to hospital. In hospital you can get fluid from a drip in your vein and nutrition through a tube (enteral nutrition), if needed.
- Hyperemesis can be stressful for you and those around you. Stress, depression and anxiety may make vomiting worse, so it is important to ask for help. Speak to your Doctor, Midwife or Dietitian for more support.
- As symptoms settle, return to healthy eating. This is important to replace the nutrients you have been missing out on. Your dietitian may also recommend a multivitamin supplement suitable for pregnant women.

**For further information contact your Dietitian or Nutritionist: \_\_\_\_\_**

This handout has been informed by:

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