

Pregnancy - Common Symptoms and Care Tips
Article

Early Pregnancy Signs and Symptoms

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Are your symptoms the result from pregnancy or something else? Explore the early pregnancy symptoms to decide if you should consider taking a pregnancy test.

Early signs and symptoms of Pregnancy

Am I Pregnant, or Is It Something Else?

When you are sexually active, you have a lot of "what ifs," the most important of which is "am I pregnant?" Because many pregnancy symptoms are not unique to pregnancy, women frequently wonder if their symptoms result from pregnancy or something else entirely. **Check out this article to see if it's time to consider taking a pregnancy test.**



Tracking your cycle is one of the best things you can do if you're trying to get pregnant, avoid pregnancy, or just want to learn more about it!

There are many apps available for your smartphone, tablet, and/or computer that can help you keep track of when your next period is due.

These apps can also keep track of your symptoms and, after a few months, can help you narrow down your expected fertility window/ovulation.

What are the Most Common Early Pregnancy Signs??

I missed my period

If you're in your reproductive years and haven't had your expected menstrual cycle for a week or more, you could be pregnant. This symptom, however, can be misleading if you have an irregular menstrual cycle.



Breasts are tender and swollen

Early in pregnancy, hormonal changes may cause your breasts to become sensitive and sore. As your body adjusts to hormonal changes, the discomfort should subside after a few weeks.

Nausea may be accompanied by vomiting

Morning sickness, which can occur day or night, usually begins one month after becoming pregnant. However, some women experience nausea earlier than others, and some never experience it at all.



While the exact cause of nausea during pregnancy is unknown, pregnancy hormones are likely to play a role.

Urination has increased

You may urinate more frequently than usual. During pregnancy, the amount of blood in your body increases, causing your kidneys to process extra fluid that ends up in your bladder.



Fatigue

Fatigue is also one of the most common early pregnancy symptoms. Progesterone levels soar during early pregnancy, which may cause you to feel sleepy.



Am I pregnant, or am I about to start my period?!

Symptoms of pregnancy and menstruation can be difficult to distinguish because they are so similar: mood swings, abdominal cramping, backaches, breast tenderness, headaches, and food cravings.



There are two symptoms that are more commonly associated with pregnancy than with a menstrual period: nausea/vomiting and implantation bleeding. Keep in mind that not all women will go through this.



When a fertilized egg attaches to the uterine lining 6-12 days after fertilization, some women experience 1-3 days of light spotting, which we call implantation bleeding. This usually occurs around or before the time a woman is due to have her period.

Nausea that occurs right before a woman's period is more likely to be caused by early pregnancy (or something else) than by a menstrual period. Many people refer to this as "morning sickness," although it can occur day, night, a few days, and if you don't get a normal period when you expect it, it's time to get a pregnancy test.



If your pregnancy test is negative?

A positive test result is almost certainly correct, as long as you have followed the instructions correctly.



A negative result is less reliable. If you get a negative result, and still think you may be pregnant, wait a week and try again.

REFERENCES

1. Pregnancy Symptoms. MedlinePlus. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Last accessed: 02/22/2020.
2. Common Pregnancy Symptoms. MedlinePlus. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Last accessed: 02/22/2020.
3. What to Expect When You're Expecting. What to Expect. Last accessed: 02/22/2020.
4. What to Expect When You're Expecting. What to Expect. Last accessed: 02/22/2020.

Early Pregnancy signs and symptoms

Am I Pregnant, or Is It Something Else?¹

- When you are sexually active, you have a lot of "what ifs," the most important of which is "am I pregnant?" Because many symptoms of pregnancy are not unique to pregnancy, women frequently wonder if their symptoms result from pregnancy or something else entirely. Check out this article to see if it's time to consider taking a pregnancy test.
- Tracking your cycle is one of the best things you can do if you're trying to get pregnant, avoid pregnancy, or just want to learn more about it!
- There are many apps available for your smartphone, tablet, and/or computer that can help you keep track of when your next period is due.
- These apps can also keep track of your symptoms and, after a few months, can help you narrow down your expected fertility window/ovulation.

What are the Most Common Early Pregnancy Signs?²

I missed my period.

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Breasts are tender and swollen.

- Early in pregnancy, hormonal changes may cause your breasts to become sensitive and sore. As your body adjusts to hormonal changes, the discomfort should subside after a few weeks.

Nausea may be accompanied by vomiting.

- Morning sickness, which can occur day or night, usually begins one month after becoming pregnant. However, some women experience nausea earlier than others, and some never experience it at all.
- While the exact cause of nausea during pregnancy is unknown, pregnancy hormones are likely to play a role.

Urination has increased.

- You may urinate more frequently than usual. During pregnancy, the amount of blood in your body increases, causing your kidneys to process extra fluid that ends up in your bladder.

Fatigue.

- Fatigue is also one of the most common early pregnancy symptoms. Progesterone levels soar during early pregnancy, which may cause you to feel sleepy.

Am I pregnant, or am I about to start my period?¹

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- There are two symptoms that are more commonly associated with pregnancy than with a menstrual period: nausea/vomiting and implantation bleeding. Keep in mind that not all women will go through this.
- When a fertilized egg attaches to the uterine lining 6-12 days after fertilization, some women experience 1-3 days of light spotting, which we call implantation bleeding. This usually occurs around or before the time a woman is due to have her period.
- Nausea that occurs right before a woman's period is more likely to be caused by early pregnancy (or something else) than by a menstrual period. Many people refer to this as "morning sickness," although it can occur of day. Wait a few days, and if you don't get a normal period when you expect it, it's time to get a pregnancy test.

If your pregnancy test is negative³

- A positive test result is almost certainly correct, as long as you have followed the instructions correctly.
- A negative result is less reliable. If you get a negative result and still think you may be pregnant, wait a week and try again.

References:

1. American Pregnancy Association. Am I Pregnant, Or...?. Available at: <https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-symptoms/am-i-pregnant-or/>. Last accessed at: 12.12.2021.

2. American Pregnancy Association. Early Signs of Pregnancy. Available at: <https://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-symptoms/early-signs-of-pregnancy/>. Last accessed at: 12.12.2021.
3. Signs and symptoms of pregnancy. Page last reviewed: 8 October 2019. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/trying-for-a-baby/signs-and-symptoms-of-pregnancy/>. Last accessed at: 12.12.2021.