

# Morning Sickness, Nausea & Vomiting During Pregnancy

**PREGNANCY - COMMON SYMPTOMS AND CARE TIPS**

**ARTICLE**

**JUN 2, 2022**

Morning sickness, often known as pregnant nausea and vomiting, is a common pregnancy symptom. It affects over 70% of pregnancies.



# Morning Sickness and Nausea During Pregnancy

## What is morning sickness?

- ✓ Morning sickness, often known as **pregnant nausea and vomiting**, is a common condition. It affects over 70% of pregnancies.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Even though it's commonly referred to as "**morning sickness**," it can strike at any time of day.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ The baby is normally unharmed by nausea and vomiting during pregnancy, but it can have an impact on your life, including your ability to work or go about your normal daily activities.<sup>3</sup>



## When does nausea and vomiting of pregnancy start?

- ✓ Pregnancy nausea and vomiting commonly begin **before 9 weeks of pregnancy**.
- ✓ It usually fades gone by **14 weeks of pregnancy** for the majority of women.
- ✓ It can persist **several weeks or months** for some women.
- ✓ It can last **the entire pregnancy** for a few women.

## What causes morning sickness?

- ✓ The exact reason of morning sickness is **unknown**.
- ✓ **Low blood sugar or an increase in pregnancy hormones** like human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) or estrogen may be to blame.
- ✓ **Stress, being overtired, eating specific foods, or having motion sensitivity** can all make morning sickness worse.



## What happens when you have nausea and vomiting of pregnancy?

- ✓ Some women experience nausea for a **short period of time each day and may vomit once or twice**.
- ✓ **Nausea lasts many hours each day** in more severe cases, and vomiting happens more frequently.



## Should I seek treatment for nausea and vomiting of pregnancy?

- ✓ Unfortunately, there is no **one-size-fits-all solution to morning sickness** for everyone. Each pregnancy will be unique.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ However, there are several **dietary and lifestyle adjustments you may do** to help ease the symptoms.<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ If these don't help or if your symptoms become **more severe, your doctor may prescribe medication**.<sup>4</sup>



## Is there a term for severe nausea and vomiting of pregnancy?

- ✓ The most severe form of nausea and vomiting during pregnancy is known as **hyperemesis gravidarum**.
- ✓ Up to **3% of pregnancies** are affected with hyperemesis gravidarum.

## When is hyperemesis gravidarum diagnosed?

- ✓ A woman may be diagnosed with this illness if **she has lost 5% of her pre-pregnancy weight** and is experiencing additional symptoms of dehydration, or loss of body fluids.
- ✓ **Hyperemesis gravidarum** requires medical attention, sometimes in a hospital, to stop the vomiting and rehydrate the body.

## What are the signs of dehydration?

- ✓ Nausea and vomiting can **cause you to lose fluids**. Dehydration can occur if fluids are not replaced.
- ✓ If you have any of the following signs and symptoms of dehydration, **contact your doctor**:
  - You have a small amount of **dark-colored urine**.
  - You're not able to **urinate**.
  - You **can't keep down liquids**.
  - When you stand up, you **feel dizzy or faint**.
  - Your heart is **racing or pounding**.

## Helpful Do's and Don'ts to Ease Morning Sickness

### Do:

- Before you get out of bed, eat something simple like **dry toast or a plain biscuit**.<sup>4</sup>
- Eat small, frequent meals of **plain, high-carbohydrate, low-fat foods (such as bread, rice, crackers and pasta)**.<sup>5</sup>
- Before going to bed, take your prenatal vitamins with a **light snack**.<sup>4</sup>
- Fluids should be **consumed half an hour before or after meals**, but not during them.<sup>4</sup>
- To avoid dehydration, **drink small amounts of fluids throughout the day**.<sup>4</sup>
- If the odor bothers you, ask someone else to cook for you; **open the windows or turn on fans**.<sup>4</sup>
- Get plenty of rest and take **naps throughout the day**.<sup>4</sup>
- Avoid places that are warm; **feeling hot adds to nausea**.<sup>4</sup>
- To relieve nausea, **suck lemons or ginger, drink lemonade, or eat watermelon**.<sup>4</sup>
- Eat salty potato chips to **relax your stomach** and allow you to eat a meal.<sup>4</sup>

### Don'ts:

- Do not **lie down** after eating.
- Do not **skip meals**.
- Do not cook or eat **spicy food**.

## REFERENCES

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- Even though it's commonly referred to as "morning sickness," it can strike at any time of day.<sup>2</sup>
- The baby is normally unharmed by nausea and vomiting during pregnancy, but it can have an impact on your life, including your ability to work or go about your normal daily activities.<sup>2</sup>
- When does nausea and vomiting of pregnancy start?<sup>2</sup>
- Pregnancy signs such as nausea and vomiting commonly begin before 9 weeks of pregnancy.
- It usually fades gone by 14 weeks of pregnancy for the majority of women.
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- It can last the entire pregnancy for a few women.

## What causes morning sickness?<sup>1</sup>

- The exact reason of morning sickness is unknown.
- Low blood sugar or an increase in pregnancy hormones like human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) or estrogen may be to blame.
- Stress, being overtired, eating specific foods, or having motion sensitivity can all make morning sickness worse.

## What happens when you have nausea and vomiting of pregnancy?<sup>2</sup>

- Some women experience nausea for a short period of time each day and may vomit once or twice.
- Nausea lasts many hours each day in more severe cases, and vomiting happens more frequently.

## Should I seek treatment for nausea and vomiting of pregnancy?

- Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to morning sickness for everyone. Each pregnancy will be unique.<sup>3</sup>
- However, there are several dietary and lifestyle adjustments you may do to help ease the symptoms.<sup>3</sup>
- If these don't help or if your symptoms become more severe, your doctor may prescribe medication.<sup>3</sup>

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- The most severe form of nausea and vomiting during pregnancy is known as hyperemesis gravidarum.
- Up to 3% of pregnancies are affected with hyperemesis gravidarum.

## When is hyperemesis gravidarum diagnosed?<sup>2</sup>

- A woman may be diagnosed with this illness if she has lost 5% of her pre-pregnancy weight and is experiencing additional symptoms of dehydration, or loss of body fluids.
- Hyperemesis gravidarum requires medical attention, sometimes in a hospital, to stop the vomiting and rehydrate the body.

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- Do not cook or eat spicy food.

## References

1. Cleveland Clinic. Morning Sickness (Nausea and Vomiting of Pregnancy). Last reviewed by a Cleveland Clinic medical professional on 06/29/2017. Available on: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/16566-morning-sickness-nausea-and-vomiting-of-pregnancy>. Last accessed at: 28/01/2022
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