

MORNING SICKNESS

Nausea and vomiting are two of the most common complaints of early pregnancy, affecting 50 to 80% of women. Because symptoms are usually worse upon arising, when your stomach is empty, it is often called “morning sickness.” It can, however, occur at any time of day. Nausea and/or vomiting may begin as early as 6 weeks after the start of the last menstrual period. Symptoms generally disappear 6 to 8 weeks later.

Please remember that morning sickness is a normal part of pregnancy. The following suggestions may help you deal with your symptoms, but time will be the only real cure. If after trying these suggestions you continue to be unable to tolerate food, or if you seem dehydrated, or if you are losing weight, please call one of the Obstetric Nurse Specialists at the office at 717-397-8177.

Dietary Changes

- Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day. Nausea is often worse when your stomach is empty.
- Eat easily-digested foods such as complex carbohydrates (such as breads, cereal, pasta, rice, potatoes, crackers) and low-fat protein foods (such as lean meat, poultry, cheese).
- Have a snack before going to bed (crackers, cheese, yogurt), and keep something by the bedside for during the night should you arise.
- Have a cracker or two before you get out of bed in the morning.
- Drink fluids between meals, not with meals, which can contribute to nausea.
- Avoid “trigger foods.” You will learn what these are for you. They usually include fried, spicy, and fatty foods. Sometimes even the smell of certain foods is enough to trigger nausea.
- Caffeine may make nausea worse for some women.
- Take your prenatal vitamin after dinner or at bedtime, not first thing in the morning.
- Herbal teas (such as spearmint, peppermint raspberry, chamomile, or ginger) have been found to be helpful for nausea. Sip the tea throughout the day.

Other Remedies

If you have made changes to your diet and are still unable to get through the day, you can try one of the following suggestions. Remember to try these one at a time, and to try it for several days to see which will be most effective.

- Ginger is often very useful for nausea. Ginger root tablets (200 or 300 mg) can be taken twice a day. Ginger root tea and ginger beer can also be helpful.
- Milk of magnesia (magnesium hydroxide): chew 1 tablet 2-3 times per day in between meals.
- Vitamin B6: 25 mg every 8 hours.
- Unisom (doxylamine): 1/2 tablet every 8 hours
 - If Unisom makes you too drowsy during the day, use only at bedtime and consider adding Bonine or Dramamine Less Drowsy (meclizine) at 25 mg (1 tablet) every 8 hours.