

Comfort During Pregnancy

FEELING TIRED

Why? Changing hormones, increased metabolism, possibly anemia.

This might help: Listen to your body and rest more, take naps

BREAST DISCOMFORT

Why? The breast glands are developing and expanding.

This might help: Wear a larger, well fitting supportive bra. Try cold compresses (for example, a washcloth dipped in cold water) on your breasts as needed.

URINATING OFTEN

Why? The expanding uterus puts more pressure on your bladder and your kidneys are working more efficiently.

This might help: Avoid liquids close to bedtime. Accept that you will be getting up at least once per night to urinate. Consider it practice for parenting!

HEADACHES AND VISION CHANGES

Why? Nasal congestion, fatigue, eyestrain, anxiety and tension. Vision changes are often related to increased water retention and are temporary. However, do to the association with pregnancy induced high blood pressure, if you have a headache AND visual changes in the late second or third trimester, inform your physician.

This might help: Drink more water and eat something. Rest and try to relax. Use a hot moist towel over your eyes and forehead.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING

Why? Changing hormones.

This might help: Eat small, frequent meals (every 2 hours) so your stomach is never empty. Eat a few crackers or other food you can tolerate before getting out of bed in the morning or even during the night if you wake up. Eat a protein snack (cheese, egg, meat, fish, nuts, or peanut butter) at bedtime. Eat crystallized ginger, drink ginger tea or chew papaya extract tablets to help settle your stomach.

Comfort During Pregnancy continued

HEARTBURN

Why? Hormonal and physical changes.

This might help: Avoid caffeine, carbonated beverages, chocolate and high acid foods such as citrus, tomatoes, mustard, vinegar, spicy and fried or fatty foods. Don't eat large meals. Eat multiple small meals. Drink liquids between meals, instead of "washing down" food at mealtime. Do not eat within 2 to 3 hours of going to bed. Sleep propped up with a pillow. Try an over the counter antacid such as Tums.

WEIGHT GAIN AND NUTRITION

- A weight gain of 25-35 pounds by the end of pregnancy is ideal for most patients. If you are overweight or underweight prior to pregnancy your provider may suggest a different weight range.
- Your protein needs increase during pregnancy. You should eat 8-9 ounces of protein per day. Protein foods include meat, fish, poultry, eggs, tofu, peanut butter, cheese and yogurt.
- Drink plenty of water- 8-12 eight ounce glasses of water per day.
- Meat should be thoroughly cooked.

IMPORTANT NUTRIENTS FOR PREGNANCY

- Calcium is particularly important in pregnancy to develop strong bones. You should have 1300 mg of calcium per day. Calcium is found in dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt. It is also found in broccoli, kale, cabbage, seafood, tofu, sesame seeds, molasses, white beans, almonds, brazil nuts.

Tip: Iron and calcium "compete" for absorption. Take these supplements separately for best absorption (about 1½ hours apart).

- Iron is important for healthy blood. Your needs are 30 mg per day in pregnancy. Iron is found in red meats, spinach, enriched breads and cereals, dried fruit, beans and peanut butter.

Tip: Have a vitamin C source (such as juice or fruit) with your iron to improve absorption.

- Folic Acid for blood and new cells. It is found in dark green vegetables, liver, yeast, nuts, legumes and whole grains.