

COMMON DISCOMFORTS OF PREGNANCY

Revised 3/2016

| Discomfort | When in Pregnancy | What you can do to help |
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| Ankle/foot swelling | Second and third trimester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Rest on your side (left is best) as much as possible. * Wear support hose. *Exercise regularly. *Limit salt intake. *Avoid heat as much as possible. *Maintain good posture and body mechanics. *Wear comfortable shoes and avoid high heels. *While sitting, prop your feet up (even a few inches helps) and don't cross your legs. *Continue drinking lots of fluids. |
| Backache | Worsens as pregnancy progresses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Walk with back straight, avoid the "waddle." *Never sit straight up from a back lying position. *Place a small pillow or rolled towel in the lower part of your back when sitting down or driving your car; elevate your feet. *Wear low, rubber soled shoes. *Avoid lifting anything heavy. *Apply heat or ice to your back. * Do pelvic tilt excersises. |
| Breast tenderness | Begins early in pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wear a good support or athletic bra day and night. *Soak in a warm bath. |
| Breast leakage | Begins durning the second trimester. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wear breast pads that don't have any plastic on them; change frequently if damp. *Avoid harsh soaps, creams or ointments on breast. |
| Bleeding from the vagina | Any time in pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * May notice light bleeding after sexual intercourse. * Call your provider if it continues after 30 min. *If heavy bleeding occurs (like your period) call your provider immediately. |
| Carpel Tunnel Symptoms (numbness and tingling in wrist,hands,and fingers) | Second and third trimester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Do not sit with hands hanging down at side;elevate affected arms. *Move positions frequently. *Decrease salt to avoid excessive swelling. *If symptoms are extremely severe a referral can be made for a wrist splint. |

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| Constipation | Second and third trimester. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Eat food high in fiber. examples: (fruits,vegetables,bran) *Drink 8-10 glasses of water a day. *Exercise each day. *Avoid laxatives and enemas unless prescribed by your provider. *Maintain regular schedule for bowel movements. *Try eating dried prunes, apricots or drinking prune or apricot juice. |
| Contractions/ Abdominal | After the 20th week. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Rest; lie down on your left side about 20 min. *Drink two to three glasses of water or juice quickly. *Time the frequency of contractions. *Call your provider if contractions do not stop with in an hour or are 10 min apart or closer. |
| Dizziness/ Light Headed | Begins early and continues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Get up slowly from lying down. *Don't go too long between meals and carry snacks with you. *Drink lots of fluids. *If you get dizzy, lie down on your side or bend forward with your head down close to your knees. *Wear support hoes. *Move slowly and deliberately *Avoid warm crowded areas. *Contact your doctor if symptoms are severe. |
| Enlarging Belly and Breasts | Second half of pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sleep on your side with pillows between your legs and supporting your abdomen. *Wear loose, comfortable clothing. *Wear a supportive bra even to bed. *Rest as needed. |
| Fatigue or Tiredness | Early in pregnancy and again in the last month. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Take extra naps during the day if possible. *Try to get at least 8 hours of sleep a night. *Eat a well balanced diet to prevent anemia. *Continue to exercise but not to the point of exhaustion. |
| Flatulence | Anytime, especially after 20 weeks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Try to schedule your daily bowel movement. *Avoid fatty foods such as beans, cabbage, and sodas. *Increase fiber and water to your diet. *Thoroughly and slowly chew foods and avoid large meals. *Increase exercise. |
| Food Cravings | Anytime during pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Okay to indulge a bit as long as your diet is otherwise healthy and food choices are not harmful. *Report unusual craving such as clay dirt, corn starch, or ice to your medical provider. |

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| Frequent Urination | Begins early, gets better mid pregnancy, and then increases towards the end of pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Know where the bathrooms are when you are out. Empty your bladder regularly. *Do not decrease your fluid intake. *Expect to make many trips to the bathroom, day and night. *Avoid drinking lots of fluids before bedtime. *Perform Kegal exercises. *Report burning or pain on urination to your physician. |
| Headaches | First half of pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Avoid eye strain. Rest your eyes frequently and take frequent computer breaks. *Use Tylenol as directed. *Avoid aspirin and other pain medications, unless you have discussed their use with your provider. *Drink plenty of water. *Eat regularly. * *Contact your doctor for constant "splitting" headache not relieved by Tylenol or accompanied by blurred vision. |
| Heartburn | Second and third trimester. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Eat frequent and small meals. *Eat slowly and chew your food well. *Avoid deep fried, greasy and spicy foods. *Drink fluids between your meals. *Avoid lying down right after meals. *Antacids, as directed, are safe and effective. |
| Hemorrhoids | Anytime in pregnancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Apply cold Witch Hazel pads (Tucks) or hemorrhoid ointment. *Avoid constipation (see constipation). *Avoid prolonged sitting on toilet. *Do your Kegal exercises. *Take sitz baths or warm baths 3-4 times/day. |
| Increased Saliva | First trimester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Chew gum and eat hard candy-watch excess calories. *Use mouthwash. *Avoid starches. |
| Increased Vaginal Discharge | Throughout Pregnancy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wear cotton underwear. *Avoid nylon, panty hose, feminine hygiene soaps or sprays. *DO NOT DOUCHE. *Wipe front to back. *Inform your provider if your vaginal discharge is yellow or greenish, thick and cheesy, or has a strong fish-like odor, or if there is soreness, itching, or burning. |

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| <p>Leg Cramp</p> | <p>Second half of pregnancy.</p> | <p>*Extra potassium or calcium may help. Try eating a banana or drinking orange juice every day or drinking a glass of milk. *When you get a leg cramp, stand up on a flat surface and lean forward against a wall or chair so that the foot is flexed.</p> |
| <p>Ligament Pain (a sharp pulling/stabbing sensation on either side of your lower abdomen)</p> | <p>Can worsen with pregnancy</p> | <p>*Support your weight with your hand when changing positions. *Move slower. *Tylenol may help. *Apply ice or heat to the affected side. *Use a maternity girdle/belt. *Relieve cramping by squatting or bringing knees to chest. *This pain is not preventable.</p> |
| <p>Nasal stuffiness & Bleeding</p> | <p>First trimester and again in the third trimester.</p> | <p>*Use a humidifier/vaporizer if air is dry. *Can use an over-the-counter decongestant (Sudafed). *Use saline nasal spray. *If nasal stuffiness occurs often and is difficult to control, tell your provider. *Blow your nose gently.</p> |
| <p>Nausea (Morning Sickness)</p> | <p>Occurs early in pregnancy and usually improves after the first trimester.</p> | <p>*Nibble on saltine crackers pretzels or ginger cookies before getting up in the morning and when you are feeling queasy. *Move slowly when you get up. *After getting up in the morning, wait an hour before drinking any liquids. *Eat 5-6 small meals/day. Avoid empty or over loaded stomach. *Avoid any strong odors. *Drinking liquids between meals rather than with meals. *Stay away from greasy, smelly or spicy foods. *Chew gum and suck on hard candy (ginger candy helps). *Sip on room temperature ginger ale or clear sodas. *Sit and put your head down between your legs. *Talk to your provider if your symptoms continue or if you cannot keep any foods or fluids down. *Stop smoking *Wear seabands (motion sickness) (available at most drug stores) on both wrists. *Have a high protein snack at night before bed (example cheese & crackers, peanut butter, crackers, and a glass of milk.</p> |