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Vomiting and morning sickness

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Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, often known as morning sickness, is very common in early pregnancy.

It can affect you at any time of the day or night or you may feel sick all day long.

Morning sickness is unpleasant, and can significantly affect your day-to-day life. But it usually clears up by weeks 16 to 20 of your pregnancy and does not put your baby at any increased risk.

There is a chance of developing a severe form of pregnancy sickness called hyperemesis gravidarum. This can be serious, and there's a chance you may not get enough fluids in your body (dehydration) or not get enough nutrients from your diet (malnourishment). You may need specialist treatment, sometimes in hospital.

Sometimes urinary tract infections (UTIs) can also cause nausea and vomiting. A UTI usually affects the bladder, but can spread to the kidneys.

Treatments for morning sickness

Unfortunately, there's no hard and fast treatment that will work for everyone's morning sickness.

Every pregnancy will be different.

But there are some changes you can make to your diet and daily life to try to ease the symptoms.

If these do not work for you or you're having more severe symptoms, your doctor or midwife might recommend medicine.

Things you can try yourself

If your morning sickness is not too bad, your GP or midwife will initially recommend you try some lifestyle changes:

- get plenty of rest (tiredness can make nausea worse)
- avoid foods or smells that make you feel sick
- eat something like dry toast or a plain biscuit before you get out of bed
- eat small, frequent meals of plain foods that are high in carbohydrate and low in fat (such as bread, rice, crackers and pasta)
- eat cold foods rather than hot ones if the smell of hot meals makes you feel sick
- drink plenty of fluids, such as water (sipping them little and often may help prevent vomiting)
- eat foods or drinks containing ginger – there's some evidence ginger may help reduce nausea and vomiting (check with your pharmacist before taking ginger supplements during pregnancy)
- try acupressure – there's some evidence that putting pressure on your wrist, using a special band or bracelet on your forearm, may help relieve the symptoms



Anti-sickness medicine

If your nausea and vomiting is severe and does not improve after trying the above lifestyle changes, your GP may recommend a short-term course of an anti-sickness medicine, called an antiemetic, that's safe to use in pregnancy.

Often this will be a type of antihistamine, which are usually used to treat allergies but also work as medicines to stop sickness (antiemetic).

Antiemetics will usually be given as tablets for you to swallow.

But if you cannot keep these down, your doctor may suggest an injection or a type of medicine that's inserted into your bottom (suppository).

See your GP if you'd like to talk about getting anti-sickness medication.

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/related-conditions/common-symptoms/vomiting-and-morning-sickness/>

