

# Women's Health Center of Oregon

## NAUSEA IN PREGNANCY

Many women suffer from nausea, with or without vomiting, during the first three months of pregnancy. Although it is referred to as “morning sickness,” it can occur any time of the day or night. This queasiness is caused by hormonal changes that accompany pregnancy. The following suggestions alone or in combination may help with your symptoms.

1. Before going to bed, eat or drink something light such as fruit, juice, milk, yogurt, or cottage cheese. Have dry cereal, crackers, plain toast, or other dry carbohydrate foods by your bed to eat during the night and before you get out of bed.
2. Get out of bed slowly, avoiding sudden movements.
3. Do not let your stomach get completely empty. Eating small amounts frequently is better tolerated. Plan what you need for the day and divide it into five or six small meals instead of three large ones.
4. Eat high protein foods – eggs, cheese, nuts, and meat – as well as fresh fruit. These help prevent low blood sugar which can make morning sickness worse.
5. Do not drink extra fluids or eat soup with your meals. Instead, drink milk, water, soup and limited amounts of juice between meals. (Fruit juices are high in sugar and low in other nutrients.) Sipping through the day rather than drinking large amounts at one time is usually easier on a sensitive stomach.
6. Avoid greasy or fried foods, as they can be especially nauseating; for example: butter, margarine, gravy, bacon, oils, mayonnaise, salad dressings, and pastries.
7. Avoid spicy or heavily seasoned foods, such as those cooked with garlic, onion, pepper, chili, and other spices. Avoid foods with strong or offensive odors. Open windows to get rid of cooking smells.
8. Avoid foods that give you gas or disagree with you.
9. Spearmint, peppermint, ginger or raspberry teas may relieve nausea.
10. Drinking small amounts of soda water or soft drink such as 7-Up, Sprite or real ginger ale (not Canada Dry) may help.
11. Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) can help nausea if taken in large doses (most prenatal vitamins contain only about 5 mg.) Buy B6 in 50 mg tablets and take up to 4 a day (1 or 2 in a.m. and p.m.).
12. Avoid all over-the-counter anti-nausea medications, unless you talk with your provider for a recommended medication.
13. Get plenty of fresh air – take a walk, sleep with the window open, and use an exhaust fan while cooking.

**REMEMBER:** If you go more than 24 hours without keeping down foods or liquids, you should contact your practitioner immediately!