

*Contact your
physician or
nurse if you are
losing weight
or cannot eat
anything.*

Nausea and Vomiting During Pregnancy

Nausea and vomiting, sometimes called morning sickness, is a common complaint during the first 3 months of pregnancy. About half of all pregnant people have nausea and 1/3 of these also have vomiting. Nausea and vomiting may be a result of hormone changes and changes in digestion caused by pregnancy. The information in this brochure will help you manage this problem.

Choosing foods

Sometimes the hardest part about nausea and vomiting is finding foods that appeal to you. Are you craving a particular food? Does anything sound like it would taste good? Think of the different food qualities and try to find some that appeal to you.

Salty	Dry	Spicy	Crunchy
Wet	Earthy	Sweet	Lumpy
Mushy	Bitter	Cold	Aromatic
Sour	Hot	Fizzy	Fruity

If nothing in particular sounds good to you, try these common foods and beverages that may help lessen your nausea:

Crackers	Juice bars/Popsicles®
Pretzels	Chilled orange sections
Dry cereal	Teas such as raspberry, mint and chamomile
Dill pickles	Lemonade
Grapes	Cola soda
Watermelon	Ginger ale

If there is still nothing that appeals to you, start with small sips of a clear liquid nutrition supplement such as Ensure® Clear or BOOST® Breeze®, or an instant breakfast product such as Carnation Breakfast Essentials®.

Although a balanced diet is very important during your pregnancy, the most important thing right now is to break the nausea and vomiting cycle. Your tastes, cravings and foods that make you feel ill will change throughout your pregnancy. Take it 1 day at a time. Try a few different foods each day.

You may need to start out with small, frequent snacks or meals. Small, in this case, may mean only 1 or 2 bites. Start with a few bites every 15 minutes. When this is working, try a few more bites every 30 minutes, and then a few more bites every 45 minutes. In this way, you can slowly work your way to mini meals every 2 hours.

In the beginning of your pregnancy, liquids, especially “thin liquids” like water, may make you feel nauseous or vomit. Unless you crave a specific liquid, start your meal with a food item. However, remember that liquids are important to prevent dehydration. To boost your liquid intake, try ice chips or frozen juice bars. Sometimes, a sour liquid like lemonade or a “flat” soda may stay down. Experiment to see what works best for you.

Triggers

Another important way to ease nausea and vomiting is to find out which things may trigger the problem. Here is a list of common triggers and some suggestions for handling with them.

Trigger	Solutions
Heightened sense of smell	<p>Remove or avoid bothersome odors. Some examples include strong cleaning products, heavy perfumes, cigarette smoke or strong-smelling foods (such as fish, garlic or onions).</p> <p>If you cannot remove the odor, use a fan, open a window or leave the room.</p> <p>Carry a fresh lemon or fresh mint with you to mask the offensive odor.</p> <p>Sip drinks through a straw or from a cup with a lid.</p> <p>If the smell of hot foods bothers you, eat cold foods such as sandwiches, salads, or cheese and crackers</p> <p>If you cannot stand the smell of the food you have just cooked, eat something else.</p> <p>Cook foods that do not have strong odors or ask someone else to prepare food for you.</p>
Empty stomach	<p>Do not let your stomach get empty. If you wait until you feel hungry, you may feel more nauseous.</p> <p>Eat small, frequent meals.</p> <p>Carry snacks with you that do not need to be refrigerated such as peanut butter crackers, cheese crackers, raisins or dry cereal.</p> <p>Have a snack before you go to bed at night. Try not to go longer than 10 hours overnight without eating.</p>
Fatigue	<p>Get plenty of rest.</p>
Stress	<p>Try to reduce your stress by doing away with unnecessary tasks. Ask for help or spend 15 to 30 minutes a day relaxing. Light exercise, such as walking, may help ease tension.</p>

Trigger	Solutions
Sudden movement	Try to wake up to soothing music instead of a jarring alarm. Let your stomach settle before you get out of bed. Sometimes it helps to eat saltines, dry cereal or pretzels before you get out of bed to help settle your stomach.
Multivitamin/mineral supplement	If your multivitamin really upsets your stomach, talk with your physician or nurse. Try taking it in the afternoon, before bed or any time when your nausea may be less. If taking it still makes you feel sick, ask your physician about switching to a children’s chewable multivitamin or a gummy prenatal multivitamin instead.
Toothpaste	Brush your teeth after breakfast, brush with water or try a children’s fruit-flavored toothpaste.

You may slowly be able to eat a more normal diet as your pregnancy progresses. You may also feel best if you eat small, frequent meals. Ask your physician or dietitian if you have questions or concerns about your eating habits as your pregnancy progresses.

When to call your physician

Contact your physician, clinic nurse or nurse practitioner if:

- Your nausea and vomiting does not improve or becomes worse.
- You are losing weight.
- You cannot eat or drink anything.