

Pregnancy and Nausea

Feel a bit shit? Early pregnancy can be pretty tough. If one more person tells you to eat a dry cracker - SO HELP YOU GOD. And your partner might be loving your new boobs - but let's be honest, putting a bra on can almost mean death and what about that shower water hitting the nips - but no honey, please enjoy, give them a good squeeze! NOT.

On top of the sorest boobs you've ever had, you find yourself in a constant relentless river of nausea. Morning sickness is the biggest lie ever - let's call it what it truly is 'ALL DAY SICKNESS'. You feel that sea sick you might as well give yourself a pirate name. So Captain-Melon-Tits, let's look over some possible things to try for nausea relief.

Some of these have been proven in the scientific literature, and some are old wives tales. Either way, they can all be worth trying - WHATEVER WORKS! You also might find that one method helps for a few days and then loses its magic powers, so try another option on the list - even if you tried it last monday without success, it might work today!

I'm sorry you're going through the things. It can be quite a shock to the system, and even more so to your emotions. Feeling sick without a break is so taxing and can wear the most resilient woman down. I hear you my love, your tears are not silent. As much as it doesn't feel like it right now, you are going to be ok. Becoming a mum start now. The surrender to the uncontrollable begins with all day sickness. It is shit - so cry when you need to. It is hard - so be angry about it if you want to. Then surrender. You're body is amazing. Your body is not trying to end your life (even though this will be hard to believe some days). Its growing an actual HUMAN. Hugs and love.

Good luck me-goddess-with-a-peg-leg. It is my sincerest hope and wish that you can find some relief.
Bec xx

Beverages

- Iced water (not room temp)
- Ginger tea (hold or cold). Add a little honey if you need the sweetness.
- Iced water with cordial
- Cold orange Juice
- Cold pineapple Juice
- Cold apple juice
- Lemonade
- Cold peppermint tea
- Cold milk. Some of you may gag at the thought of this. It doesn't have to be dairy milk. Try Cold almond milk as an alternative. You may be surprised with this one!
- Ice chips to suck on
 - Please note, if you are having the NEED to crunch ice. This often indicates that you are low in iron. Talk with your pregnancy health care provider to look into your iron levels and how you can boost them. Spirulina tablets are a good option - they don't cause reflux so they won't repeat on you. Make sure you're taking an adequate dose, or take them alongside another iron supplement.

Foods

- Salt - pretzels, plain or salt n vinegar chips, salted plain crackers, cooked white potato with salt
- Vegemite toast (try plain sourdough)
- Sourdough and avocado (plus salt if desired, or vegemite and avo)
- Plain oats (if desired top with fresh berries, honey, chopped apple or banana)
- Homemade chicken or veggie soup
- Plain pasta (with napolitana tomato sauce if desired)
- Apples (try different varieties, some may be better tolerated, pink lady is my fav)
- Pears (good for slower bowels and hydration)
- Eucalyptus lollies (like you used to get from the school canteen!). Try eucalyptus & menthol soothers. Or try a different flavour if you feel drawn to it.
- Barley sugars - boiled lollies (especially if you can't keep much down)
- Cold cut up fruit from the fridge (grapes - or try frozen grapes to suck on, watermelon, orange, paw paw). They are all great for hydration too if you're having trouble keeping liquids down

Foods to Avoid

- Coffee and black tea. Chances are you don't feel like these anyway. They are very DEHYDRATING, literally stimulating a hormone in the body that makes you PEE MORE (as if you need that right now!). If it's the only way you're getting through the day, make sure you're taking in extra water to make up for it.
- Garlic and/or raw onion. Garlic and raw onion are very stimulating for the stomach. Try taking a break from these foods in your cooking if you notice you're tummy is a bit upset after eating them. Onion in a slow-cooked soup, or caramelized overdone onions on a bunnings sanga should be fine.
- Deep fried stuff or really oily dishes. Meals that have heaps of fat in them stimulate the gallbladder big time, it's the gallbladder's job to produce bile that breaks down the fat for digestion. More bile is not fun if you're throwing up a lot or getting that infamous throat bile burp 'the almost spew' (so gross). But if all you can stomach is maccas chips and nuggies - then mate, its ok to go with that.
- Heaps of sugar at once. Obvs this isn't healthy even when not pregnant. But you might find that a sugar high hits you more than normal in the 'feel sick after eating it' department. And it will getcha by surprise. So if you're going to eat something sugary (like a delicious slice of baked cheesecake), eat it slowly so you can monitor that feeling creeping in. And on a gross note, sugar becomes really mucousy in the stomach - throwing up something sugary is all types of stringy, like you may vomit more just from witnessing your own vomit. Soz not soz, just want to warn you, my lovely sisters.

Tips When Eating Meals

- Small portions, more often. You may notice if you're too full you feel sick, and too hungry you also feel sick. Go for mini meals every 2 hours. Even just one salted craker with avo and a few sips of cold water, or a small apple.
- Your body will likely tell you, in advance, if a meal is going to work out or not. When hungry, think about different foods that you could eat. When you think of a food your body isn't interested in, you may notice that just the thought brings on nausea. When you think of a food your body may tolerate, you may notice your tummy feels ok. Go for this food :)
- Try to separate when you drink liquids from when you eat food. In early pregnancy, the tummy can feel tight and small, have your small meal, then have a few sips of your beverage 20-30 mins later. Sometimes adding liquid just before or just after a meal can make the tummy suddenly feel overfull... and up it comes.

Supplements

- ❑ Ginger capsules. Also called 'Zingiber officinale' ginger capsules. Found at most chemists or health food stores. These have been shown relief pregnancy nausea HEAPS in the scientific literature. Personally, these saved my life during my first pregnancy. Different capsules have different dosages, some have 1000mg, some 500mg or thereabouts. No health risks to the growing foetus have been found when taking ginger. I found that taking 1000mg in the morning first thing, then 500mg every 3-4 hours was right for me. Compared to the literature, this is a higher daily dose. Start by just taking 500mg of a morning and see how you feel. Use your own body as a guide.

Practitioners to Consult

- ❑ See a Chiropractor. Chiropractic adjustments can help calm balance the nervous system. The relaxation part of the nervous system helps with digestion. The more frantic 'flight or fright' part of the nervous system reduces digestion. Balancing the nervous system may help settle body tension down.
- ❑ See an Acupuncturist (TCM practitioner). Acupuncture works with the flow of energy through the body (chi). Using different pressure points on the body may assist in the reduction of nausea.
- ❑ See your chosen care provider for your pregnancy. Ask them about pharmaceutical options if nothing has worked and you just can't cope any more. Some women experience really intense nausea called Hyperemesis gravidarum. Dehydration is a major concern. Some women may even need a short stay in hospital with a drip to help them rehydrate. Please consult your GP/pregnancy health care provider if you are feeling at your wits end.

Clothing Suggestions

- ❑ Sea sick wrist bands (available at most chemists). The acupressure points on the wrist can help relieve nausea.
- ❑ No tight waist bands. Especially with high waisted pants. Too much pressure over the tummy can make things so much worse. Try jumpsuits, lower waisted loose pants, dresses etc. Undo the jeans when driving or sitting - not coz of the bub size yet, just to get the pressure off the tummy/abdomen region.
- ❑ No turtle necks or tops/jumpers that put pressure on the front of the neck. Some women feel their nausea in their throat. Just like the waistband over the tummy, collars/higher necklines can make the nausea so much worse simply from pressure over the throat.

Other Apparatus/Things to Try

- ❑ Wheat bags or hot water bottles over the stomach (upper part just under your ribs at the front, not over your uterus down lower). The warmth can be quite delightfully distracting. And it can also help relax your diaphragm and stomach wall - which are both muscle. This can be a surprising relief!
- ❑ Contrary to the above point suggesting heat, getting too hot in your body can make you feel way more nauseous. Try:
 - Cool showers
 - Ice pack over the back of your neck
 - Eating ice chips
 - Take your jumper off as soon as you feel you're getting slightly too warm. Don't wait, once that nausea hits its harder to get back to feeling ok.
- ❑ Swimming. This was a surprising one for me! The last thing I wanted to do was get in liquid that I thought would make me feel more wishy washy. But it was suggested so I tried it. AMAZING. Wading through the water in the local pool (so long as you are ok with the chlorine smell), or better yet banging out some calm laps (freestyle - your head is down and you breathe through your mouth so less smelling of the chlorine) was the best thing. And so surprisingly THE OCEAN.

Honestly the ocean fixes everything. The salt air, the refreshing cool water, the salt through your sinuses when diving under the waves (helping settle that pregnancy congestion), the sand under your tired feet, the sun on your body. It's a great pick me up if you can get to the ocean. And I almost 100% guarantee you won't feel as nauseous in the water as you do on land!

- ❑ Your partner. Gentle back tickles can be so relieving. Or try light hand massages, or light feet massages or my fave - a scalp/head massage. These can be beautifully distracting. Maybe avoid a full oiled up back rub because those massage motions may make you feel worse.
- ❑ ...If you can't convince your partner to help (or if you're doing this solo - ps don't even get me started on just how ridiculously incredible you are mama) - book in for a MASSAGE OF THE SCALP, HANDS AND FEET (just make sure they are aware of avoiding pregnancy related acupressure points). Or even better yet book in for a FACIAL! Having your face professionally touched - as weird as that sounds - is legit legal crack for pregnancy.

Breathing Techniques

- ❑ Its ok to be standing in the supermarket, or sitting at the work desk and just focus on slow breathing as a wave of nausea hits. As you breathe steadily in your nose and out of your mouth, try to relaxing your shoulders down and imagine relaxing your tummy. Breathing with intention and trying to let your body relax can really help in those horrible moments.
- ❑ Keep the breath in the middle. Big deep breaths can create too much pressure over the tummy as the lungs fill up. Shallow breaths can leave you feeling panicked and actually more anxious and spewy. Aim for an 'in the middle' breath while you actively try to relax the body.

Essential Oils

*Please purchase good quality oils. Synthetically fragrance oils will be much more likely to make you want to heave. Health food shops often stock better quality oils such as 'Springfields'. Essential oils are hugely popular at the moment, so maybe you have a friend who has a good collection of doTerra oils or another similar brand. Invite yourself over to smell the different scents to work out what works for you. Or go stand in the health food shop and smell the sample bottles. Your tummy will tell you what it agrees with and what it definitely does not.

- ❑ In a diffuser try (separately first, then you could play with mixes):
 - Peppermint
 - Eucalyptus
 - Ginger
 - Cardamom
 - Rosemary
 - Citrus: orange, lemon, grapefruit, lime, bergamot

*NOTE: The above list has not been shown to be harmful during pregnancy. Use with caution. If you have concerns please do your own research to make sure you're comfortable with your decision to use certain oils. The diffuser is the safest way to use the oils.

Please AVOID clary sage, wintergreen, oregano and fennel at this stage of your pregnancy.