

## Common Pregnancy Discomforts

There are many common complaints during pregnancy. Complaints are things that are uncomfortable, but are normal. They are not dangerous to you or your baby. There are suggestions we can make to help minimize the discomforts of pregnancy, but we cannot eliminate them.

Complications of pregnancy are problems that may arise that may need some kind of medical intervention. They are not normal complaints.

Emergencies during pregnancy are problems that arise that need to be addressed immediately. They may be life threatening to you or your baby.

### Common Complaints, Reason & Suggestions

**Backache:** Change in weight & shape, pressure from the growing baby.

Try: Good posture, good body mechanics, massage, good shoes, exercise, pelvic tilts, chiropractic care.

**Bladder problems:** Pressure from the uterus, hormone and circulation changes, increased urine output.

Try: Kegels, drink 8-10 glasses of water per day, plan to be able to use restroom frequently, take cranberry tablets, avoid sugar.

**Breast Leakage:** Breasts are producing colostrum

Try: Put cotton nursing pads in your bra

**Constipation:** Hormones slow peristalsis, pressure from the growing uterus.

Try: Don't ignore the urge, exercise, drink lots of fluids, increase fiber and fruits, go to the bathroom same time each day after a meal (preferably breakfast), drink a hot drink such as herbal tea am & pm

**Gums Bleeding:** Pregnancy hormones

Try: Brush and floss teeth, Vitamin C

**Heartburn:** Slowing of digestive system.

Try: Eat several small meals instead of 3 large ones, avoid spicy or acidic food and caffeine, good posture, comfortable clothes, avoid antacids, papaya tablets.

**Hemorrhoids:** Increased blood volume causes dilation of the veins, pressure from the uterus.

Try: Avoid constipation, Kegels, cold witch hazel or white vinegar compresses, Preparation H, small slice of raw potato in the rectum decreases swelling.

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Leg Cramps: Changes in calcium absorption

Try: Eat more calcium, dorsiflex foot (pull toes toward you) to pull cramp out, massage.

Nausea and vomiting: Hormones of pregnancy

Try: Eat small frequent meals, toast or crackers, peppermint tea or candy, accupressure wrist bands, eat protein with every meal, take vitamins only with meals, if severe take children's chewable vitamins and folic acid until nausea improves.

Pelvic discomfort: Pelvic joints relax

Try: Warm bath, massage, change of position, pelvic tilts

Shortness of breath: Increased need for oxygen, growing uterus.

Try: Stretch, good posture, slow down, listen to your body.

Skin blotches: Pregnancy hormones

Try: Avoid sun

Stretch marks: Growing abdomen

Try: Good Nutrition, massage Cocoa Butter & Vitamin E oil.

Swelling: Fluid retention, increased blood volume

Try: Don't cross legs, don't stand for prolonged time, loose clothing, adequate fluid intake, salt food to taste, avoid processed foods, avoid sugar, eat garlic, parsley, onions, melons, and cucumbers.

Tiredness: Hormones of pregnancy

Try: Rest! Early to bed, nap, exercise, vitamins, avoid junk food, eat protein, make sure you're not anemic.

Vaginal discharge: The body's natural cleansing

Try: Do not douche, wear cotton underwear, minipad if necessary

Varicose veins: Increased and slowed circulation

Try: Avoid prolonged standing, don't cross legs, rest with feet up above heart, support hose, good support shoes.

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Vaginal bleeding
- A gush or flow of watery fluid from your vagina

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- Regular contractions, cramping, pelvic heaviness,
- Severe headache
- Blurred vision or spots in front of your eyes
- Marked swelling of your hands and face
- Severe abdominal pain or cramps
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Severe unexplained pain in your shoulder
- High fever (over 101)

### Sources:

Holistic Midwifery by Anne Frye

Maternity and Gynecologic Care by Bobak & Jensen

Nurse Midwifery by Helen Varney

While Waiting by