



# Morning sickness

## What is Morning Sickness?

Pregnancy nausea and vomiting (or Morning Sickness) is common, and normally occurs early in pregnancy and improves by the second trimester. It does not impact your chances of having a healthy pregnancy. Morning Sickness can actually occur at any time of the day, and for some women it can continue throughout the whole pregnancy. A small number of women may experience more severe nausea and prolonged vomiting that requires medical attention. Contact your midwife or doctor if you experience signs of dehydration (dark urine or dizziness with standing), repeated vomiting throughout the day (especially if you see blood in the vomit), pain or cramping, or weight loss over 2-3kg.

## What Can You Do?

Although we are uncertain about the cause, we know that changing your diet may relieve your discomfort. Here are some great tips.

### Stay Hydrated!

If you are vomiting continuously it is very important to drink fluids to avoid dehydration. Drinks that contain some sugar are better tolerated. Try to sip something every 15 minutes. The best drinks for this are: electrolyte or sports drinks (Hydralyte, Gastrolyte, Powerade, Gatorade), lemonade, ginger beer, mineral water, juices (diluted) or cordial. You could also try ice cubes or icy poles.

### Eat Regularly

Aim to eat small and often, eg. something every 30 minutes. Try the following foods:

- ▶ Crackers or bread or dry toast
- ▶ Jelly
- ▶ Popcorn or dry breakfast cereal
- ▶ Fruit – fresh or tinned
- ▶ Plain rice, pasta, potatoes or noodles
- ▶ Soups – fresh, tinned or cup-a-soups
- ▶ Dairy foods – milk, yoghurt, cheese, smoothies, custard, Sustagen or Up&Go
- ▶ Nuts or a trail mix

### Avoid Some Common Triggers

Things that can make nausea and vomiting worse could include: rich or fatty food, strong food smells, spicy food, chocolate, cigarettes, coffee, tea, cola and iron tablets.

## Using Ginger

There is some evidence that ginger helps settle pregnancy nausea. Ginger can be taken as:

- ▶ Half a teaspoon of powdered ginger dissolved in herbal tea
- ▶ Grated ginger root in hot water (can strain and serve cold with honey)
- ▶ Ginger beer (non-alcoholic) (check the ingredients label to see if it contains ginger root)
- ▶ Crystallised or glace ginger
- ▶ Ginger flavoured biscuits

## Extra Tips

Some more helpful hints include:

- ▶ Cold food is better tolerated than hot food, because there is less odour
- ▶ Space out food and drinks so you're not overfilling
- ▶ Avoid skipping meals and snacks as an empty stomach can increase nausea
- ▶ Eat slowly and sit upright
- ▶ Practice relaxation techniques
- ▶ Use relaxation strategies – such as baths, massages, essential oils, or aromatherapy
- ▶ Wear loose clothing
- ▶ Get fresh air – try eating outside
- ▶ Rest after meals but avoid lying flat
- ▶ Chew foods well
- ▶ Keep something next to your bed and eat something before you get up in the morning
- ▶ Cook and freeze meals when you're feeling well, ready for when you're having a bad day

## For more information or support

Contact the KEMH Dietitians on 6458 2776



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