

INITIAL REMEDIES FOR COMMON CHANGES/PROBLEMS DURING PREGNANCY

LOW BACK PAIN.

Back pain is common. As your uterus grows, your pelvic bone joints relax, which can cause pain in your lower back.

Try doing some of these things to help your back feel more comfortable:

- Change position
- Wear low-heeled shoes.
- Avoid lifting heavy things or children
- Do not bend over at the waist to pick things up. Squat down, bend your knees, and keep your back straight
- Place one foot on a stool or box when you have to stand for a long time
- Sleep on your side with one knee bent. Support your upper leg on a pillow
- Apply heat, cold or pressure to your back for short periods of time

BREAST CHANGES.

Early in pregnancy, your breasts begin to grow and change to prepare for breastfeeding. They will feel firm and tender. As your breasts grow, wear a bra that fits well and provides support. If you are planning to breastfeed your infant, no special nipple preparations are required.

NAUSEA/VOMITING/MORNING SICKNESS

Nausea and vomiting are common during the first 3 months of pregnancy. It can happen at any time during the day. It is common when the stomach is completely empty or completely full.

Here are some tips to make you feel more comfortable:

- Eat dry toast, cereal or crackers before getting out of bed in the morning
- Get out of bed slowly and sit on the side of the bed for a few minutes. Don't jump out of bed.
- Eat five to six small meals throughout the day.
- Avoid unpleasant smells
- Try yogurt, milk or juice before bedtime
- Avoid greasy, fried foods or spicy, heavily-seasoned foods
- Contact Dr. Garcia if nausea and vomiting persists or is severe.

HEARTBURN

It isn't your heart that is burning, it's your stomach. Changes that take place in your body during pregnancy may make the burning worse. Changes in your hormone levels slow digestion and relax the muscle that keeps the digested food and acids in your stomach.

For relief:

- Eat five or six small meals a day instead of three large ones.
- Sit up while eating
- Wait an hour after eating before lying down.
- Wait 2 hours after eating before exercising
- You may take Maalox, Mylanta or Tums as directed.
- Do NOT take Alkaseltzer or baking soda.

NASAL CONGESTION

Nasal congestion is common due to hormonally induced swelling of intranasal passages. To help relieve symptoms, try:

- Using a humidifier in your room
- Use saline nose drops. Do NOT use Afrin spray.
- Try using a Neti Pot

INCREASED VAGINAL DISCHARGE

You may notice more vaginal discharge during your pregnancy. This mucous secretion occurs from the cervix in response to the hormones of pregnancy. Excessive discharge that causes itching or has a bad odor should be evaluated. NO douching. Bloody discharge is not normal and needs to be evaluated.

HEMORRHOIDS

Hemorrhoids are varicose (or swollen) veins in the rectum. They can be painful and usually occur due to constipation, prolonged sitting and/or prolonged standing. To help prevent hemorrhoids you need to prevent constipation(see below). You may use Preparation H or Tucks pads as needed for pain or itching.

CONSTIPATION

At least half of all women are constipated at some point during pregnancy. Changes in hormones slow food's passage through your body. During the last part of pregnancy, your uterus may press

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on your rectum. This may add to the problem. To alleviate the problem drink lots of fluids, prune juice, eat foods high in fiber and exercise daily (walking is a good exercise). You may also take Colace (sold over the counter) 100mg twice per day.

INSOMNIA

Early in your pregnancy, you may be sleepy all the time but by the end of your pregnancy you may experience difficulty sleeping. To get the rest you need, take a warm bath at bedtime, lie on your side with a pillow under your abdomen and another pillow between your legs. Rest for short breaks during the day. If this does not help, you may take Benadryl allergy 25mg (1 tablet) at night as needed. Please inform Dr. Garcia that you are taking Benadryl as needed.

FOR COLDS YOU MAY TAKE:

- Chlor-Trimenton, plain Benadryl or Claritin– this will help decongest your nasal and sinus passages and help reduce swelling
- Robitussin DM– cough syrup.
- Tylenol as needed for headaches or pain. Drink plenty of fluids.
- **DO NOT TAKE-** Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Excedrin, Alka-seltzer or any other aspirin containing medications.
- Take your temperature if you feel warm. Call Dr Garcia if you experience a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees F. Also call if you feel short of breath or have chest pain.

ROUND LIGAMENT PAIN

You may experience sharp pain in either or both groin regions that is aggravated by sudden movements. This pain originates from pulling on cordlike structures originating from the groin regions and extending to the top of the uterus on both sides. The pulling of the round ligaments does not hurt your baby. Reducing physical activity will help.

HEADACHES.

Headaches are one of the most common complaints along with nausea in the first trimester. These headaches are caused by blood circulation changes and will usually subside after the first half of the pregnancy. If the headaches worsen, please call Dr. Garcia.

SKIN CHANGES

The hormones in your body often cause some changes in your skin. Some women have brownish, uneven marks around their eyes and over the nose and cheeks. This is called chloasma. These marks usually disappear or fade after delivery. Being in the sun tends to make the marks darker. Stretch marks may show up on the breasts, buttocks or lower abdomen. Moisturizing creams probably won't do much to help because stretch marks are caused by the breakdown of elastic tissue right below the surface of your skin. The good news is that stretch marks usually pale and become less noticeable after your pregnancy.

MEDICATIONS TO AVOID IN PREGNANCY

DO NOT TAKE- Sudafed, PeptoBismol, Aspirin, Motrin, Advil, Aleve, Ibuprofen