
Common Concerns/Problems

Nausea and Vomiting (Morning Sickness)

Nausea is a complaint early in pregnancy but can return in late pregnancy too. The problem is usually worse when the stomach is empty. Call the rooms if nausea/vomiting is severe. Some things to try:

- ❖ Eat dry toast, crackers, a peeled apple, or plain potatoes (cooked and peeled)
- ❖ Eat 5 or 6 small meals a day
- ❖ Avoid unpleasant odours
- ❖ Avoid drinking citrus juices, coffee, tea, and milk

Constipation

Constipation can happen at any time in pregnancy. Bowel activity, the movement of food through the digestive tract, is slower in pregnancy often resulting in constipation.

Hemorrhoids may also result from constipation.

Here are some suggestions that may help:

- ❖ Drink plenty of liquids - at least 6-8 glasses of water a day including fruit juices such as prune juice
- ❖ Eat food higher in fiber
- ❖ Exercise daily
- ❖ Avoid foods which may be constipating like cheese and bananas

Headaches

Headaches are common in early pregnancy and usually respond to Panado, but if they do not, please call us.

Nosebleeds and Bleeding Gums

A bloody nose or bleeding gums are common in pregnancy. During pregnancy small blood vessels become more fragile and bleed more easily. In the winter when the air is dry, nosebleeds are more common, and a humidifier may help.

Increased Vaginal Discharge

Vaginal discharge is a common occurrence in pregnancy. If itching or burning occur, you should be checked for an infection. Yeast infections are more common in pregnancy. Do not douche while pregnant.

Dizziness

Dizziness is common at any time during pregnancy. It often occurs with abrupt changes in position or when standing or sitting in one place for an extended period. More frequent change of position may help since this reduces pooling of blood in your legs. Please sit down before you fall down when feeling faint. It is very rare to actually faint.

Leg Cramps

Leg cramps are sharp pains usually in the lower calf muscle. They can be very painful but are harmless. Trying to walk on the affected leg or bending your toes upward may help relieve the cramp. Make sure you are drinking 4-5 glasses of milk a day to get the calcium you need, since a lack of calcium may cause these cramps. A calcium supplement may be substituted if you cannot tolerate milk.

Ligament Pain

Lower abdominal pain is a frequent complaint and can occur at any time of pregnancy. These pains are generally cramp-like or sharp pains from the top side of the uterus to the groin. They are often aggravated by twisting, rolling, or bending motions, such as getting out of bed or a chair. Changing position, a warm bath, or Panado may help relieve the discomfort. If the pain is severe, persistent, worse with pushing on the abdomen/uterus, associated with vomiting, fever, or dizziness-please call the rooms.

Heartburn

A burning sensation in your upper abdomen may accompany pregnancy. Some suggestions for relief include:

- Antacids such as Gaviscon, Mucaine can be taken. Take as directed on the package (may be taken every 2 hours if needed)
- Eliminate spicy, fatty, or greasy foods from your diet
- Drink milk to coat your stomach
- Eat food slowly
- Avoid lying flat, especially after eating

Low Back Pain

As the uterus grows, the curvature of the lower back is increased, leading to stress on the lower back muscles. Proper lifting with the legs and not the back, is important.

What You Can Do:

- Wear low-heeled (but not flat) shoes with good arch support.
- Ask for help when lifting heavy objects.
- When standing for long periods, place one foot on a stool or box.
- Don't bend over from the waist to pick things up – squat down, bend your knees, and keep your back straight.
- Sit in chairs with good back support or use a small pillow behind the lower part of your back.
- Try to sleep on your side with one or two pillows between your legs for support.
- Apply heat or cold to the painful area or massage it.

Swollen Feet and Ankles

Swelling of the feet and ankles is caused by fluid retention and usually gets worse late in the day. Drinking enough water, limiting your salt intake, and elevating your feet periodically during the day can help reduce swelling.

Varicose Veins and Hemorrhoids

The veins in the legs and pelvis are enlarged during pregnancy because of increased blood volume and pressure on them from the enlarging uterus. Hemorrhoids and varicose veins of the legs may result. Eat a diet of high fiber and stay well hydrated. Avoid prolonged standing or sitting. It is best not to cross your legs. Rectal suppositories or creams may be used for hemorrhoids; call if you need a prescription. Sitting in a warm tub bath may also be soothing. Lying on your left side will shift the uterus off the blood vessels to help improve blood flow of the lower body and placenta.

Can't Feel Baby Moving

Most women usually begin to feel movement, such as a flutter, kick, swish or roll, between 16 and 24 weeks. There is no set number of normal movements you should be feeling – every baby is different. From 18 – 24 weeks on you should feel the baby move more and more. After 32 weeks, the movements will stay roughly the same until you give birth. You may be less likely to be aware of your baby's movements when you are active or busy. Keep tabs on your baby's movement in utero – especially during third trimester. If you do notice a drop-off in your baby's usual fetal movements, please call us.