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Tips on Preventing Nausea and Vomiting During Pregnancy

Morning sickness, also called nausea and vomiting in pregnancy (NVP), is the most common complaint in early pregnancy. Approximately 80% of pregnant women experience NVP between 7-12 weeks; 20 % of women experience it for longer. Because it's difficult to know how long your NVP will last, it is important to manage it as best as possible from the onset. There is no guarantee that "it will be over in a month or so" and in the meantime it can really affect your physical and emotional health. If your NVP is to reasonably well controlled, it will take you longer to recover.

If this is your first pregnancy, you could try the natural remedies first. These may or may not control your NVP. Get plenty of rest, as fatigue can make you feel worse. If these do not work, and you continue to feel very unwell, there is effective medication available.

If you have previously experienced severe NVP (known as Hyperemesis) you may choose to start medication as soon as your nausea appears.

1. **Diclectin:** If you are prone to hyperemesis, start taking Diclectin as soon as you know you are pregnant. (You will need a prescription from your midwife or doctor.) Start with taking four pills a day: two before bed, one pill in the morning and one after lunch. Diclectin is a long-acting medicine, so if you wait until you are sick to start taking it, it won't help. If you still experience severe morning sickness, then (with your midwife or doctor's permission) double your daily dose.
2. **Vitamin B6:** Begin taking 25 mg three times a day as soon as you know you are pregnant. Vitamin B6 helps most women to some degree. For some women it will make the pregnancy just bearable, while for others it will cure the symptoms completely. Vitamin B6 also helps relieve stress, and enduring hyperemesis for any length of time is definitely stressful!

3. **Eating habits (What you eat):** Proper nutrition is very important during pregnancy but if healthy food comes up soon after you swallow it, then it is of little use to you. Basically, whatever you crave is what will stay down the best. This will be different for everyone but here are a few suggestions.

Salty:

Crackers (flavored or plain)	Pringles
Sunflower seeds	Pretzels
Toast with Cheez Whiz	Sesame Snaps
Peanuts	Broth or cup a soup
	Corn Chips

Sweet

Arrowroot or digestive cookies	Cheerios (flavored or plain)	Granola bars
Toast with brown sugar	Regular or herbal tea with honey	Muffins
		Hot chocolate
		Rice Krispie Squares

Continued Eating Habits (How you eat): Put a box beside your bed with a variety of dry foods in it. Before getting up in the morning, whether or not you feel sick yet, eat whatever you crave most from the box, and then wait at least 15 minutes before slowly getting up.
It is important not to mix solid and liquids because this causes more acid buildup in the stomach. Wait at least half an hour between eating and drinking. Eating large meals can also cause stomach upset, so keep portions small and eat whenever you feel hungry, including in the middle of the night. Again, get used to these eating habits as soon as you know you are pregnant even if you are not yet sick.

4. **Rest! Rest! Rest!** It is extremely important not to let yourself get worn down! Only do as much as you can handle and ask for help with the things you can't. Sleep whenever you are tired.
5. **Other Hints:**
   A long shower or bath can ease nausea.
   Having someone brush your hair can be relaxing.
   Massages can be very effective in easing nausea.

Problems During Pregnancy

Morning Sickness

Nausea and mild vomiting in the morning during the first trimester of pregnancy is a common problem for which there are many remedies. Most allopathic anti-nausea medicines contain antihistamines, which have been shown to cause birth defects in animals. The following herbal and old wives' preventions and remedies have no known harmful side effects. If the morning sickness persists beyond the third month of the pregnancy, seek the assistance of a Wise Woman.

Preventing Morning Sickness

There is a strong connection between nausea in early pregnancy and low bold sugar. Maintain your blood sugar level by eating small meals frequently (even every few hours) and eating a protein-rich snack, such as popcorn with nutritional yeast, or brown rice with miso, or bread and tahini, before going to sleep.

- Chemical by-products of the increased hormonal activity of pregnancy, if allowed to build up in the body, can cause morning sickness. Walk a mile a day to prevent this.
- Increase available iron and the Vitamin B Complex (especially B1 and B2) through diet or supplements. A vitamin B deficiency may cause morning sickness; supplements of 10-20 mg daily will completely relieve this nausea.
- Eat unsalted crackers or matzo before getting out of bed.
- Avoid spicy and greasy foods; even cooking greasy foods for someone else may nauseate you.
- Get out of bed slowly in the morning avoiding any sudden movements.
- Drink a cup of Anise or Fennel seed tea when you wake up.
- Drink one teaspoon of apple cider vinegar in 8 ounces of warm water first thing in the morning.

Remedies for Morning Sickness

The following remedies are listed in order of increasing strength. The mildest remedies are often sufficient, so try those first.

- Open the window or go outside to get some fresh air.
- Drink a cup or two of Raspberry leaf tea or infusion each day. Sipping the infusion before getting up or sucking on ice cubes made from the infusion increases the strength of this remedy.
- Try anyone of these homeopathic remedies: Ipecac 30x, Nux vomica 6x or Cannabis 30x.
- Drink tea made from dried peach tree leaves to help control morning sickness distress.

- Sip peppermint or spearmint infusion first thing in the morning. This is a stimulating eye-opener and effective anti-nauseant.
- Take tablespoon doses of Ginger root tea anytime nausea occurs. It is especially effective for motion sickness and early morning queasiness.
- Wild Yam Root (Dioscorea Villosa) is specific and powerful for nausea related to pregnancy. It is slower to work, but more effective and far safer than Bendectin, the allopathic medicine. Take sips of the infusion throughout the day, take teaspoonfuls of the decoction several times daily, or use a dropperful of the tincture in a glass of water or Mint tea once or twice a day.
- Ginger Root (Zingiber Officinale): Powdered and encapsulated in doses of up to 25 capsules per day for complete control of severe nausea and vomiting throughout pregnancy.
- "Seabands" can be purchased at most drug stores. They are worn on the wrist and help alleviate nausea from motion sickness and pregnancy.

Visualization for Morning Sickness

When morning sickness is severe or chronic, visualization can be used to give access to emotional aspects of the problem. Sit quietly and allow your mind to bring up images connected to vomiting/nausea. What can't you stomach? What do you want to clear out? What don't you accept? Examine and acknowledge each image as it arises, then let it float away or dissolve. We are complex beings, capable of desiring and despising simultaneously; allow yourself to see what it is about the pregnancy that makes you want to throw up. Repeat the visualization once or twice a day for at least a week for best results.