

Comfort Tips during Pregnancy

Weeks 1 to 13 - 1st Trimester

BEING TIRED

- Most pregnant women feel more tired when they first become pregnant.
- Try to get more rest and sleep.
- Take time to take care of yourself.

URINATING OFTEN

- The need to urinate more often is a normal part of pregnancy.
- This is one of the first signs that you are pregnant.
- Cut down on liquids before bedtime so you do not have to get up to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night.
- Do not reduce the amount you drink throughout the day.
- It is very important that you drink plenty of liquids while you are pregnant.
- Use the bathroom before traveling where there may not be a bathroom.

MORNING SICKNESS

- This is common during pregnancy.
- It can happen during the day or at night.
- It happens because of hormonal changes in your body, if you have not eaten, or because of certain foods or food smells.
- Nausea and vomiting may happen if you are not getting enough rest.

Some ways to help prevent nausea are:

- Eat several small meals throughout the day.
- Make sure you get enough rest.
- Do not eat or drink things that bother your stomach, like spicy or fried foods and drinks with caffeine.
- Try taking your vitamins at bedtime.
- Do not skip meals.
- Keep dry crackers by your bed to eat when you first wake up.

Weeks 14 to 28 - 2nd Trimester

CONSTIPATION

- Constipation may happen during your pregnancy.
- This happens because of the relaxation of muscles in the intestines caused by hormonal changes.

- Later in pregnancy, the growing uterus crowds the intestines. This may cause constipation.
- Sometimes this is caused by not eating enough fiber.
- You may not be getting enough exercise.
- You may need to take iron pills.
- Do not take laxatives during pregnancy.
- Ways to prevent or reduce constipation:
 - Drink at least 6 to 8 (8-ounce) glasses of fluids each day. Water is the best choice.
 - Eat fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain breads and cereals to increase fiber in your diet.
 - Exercise on a regular basis.
 - Walking is a good way to exercise.
 - Develop a daily routine for going to the bathroom.
 - Do not strain or push when going to the bathroom.
 - Do not take laxatives or stool softeners unless your doctor tells you to.



HEMORRHOIDS

- If you have trouble going to the bathroom, you may develop swollen veins in the rectum. These are called hemorrhoids.
- Hemorrhoids can make the anal area feel itchy and inflamed.
- You may see a small amount of blood on the toilet tissue or see blood when you go to the bathroom.
- Some tips to keep from getting hemorrhoids:
 - Develop a daily routine for going to the bathroom.
 - Do not strain or push when going to the bathroom.
 - Do not sit or stand for long periods of time.

GAS

- You may feel gassy or bloated.
- Develop a daily routine for going to the bathroom.
 - Do not eat beans, corn, onions, and cabbage.
 - Do not drink through a straw. This causes you to take in extra air.
 - Do not chew ice.
 - Do not drink carbonated drinks.

ROUND LIGAMENT PAIN

- The bands of tissue that hold up your uterus are called round ligaments.
- As your uterus grows, these bands stretch. It feels like a brief tug on one or both sides of your lower belly.
- The tugging may happen if you stand up fast or turn sharply.
- If this is your 1st baby, you may feel this tugging when you are 20 weeks pregnant.
- If you have been pregnant before, you may feel this tugging when you are 10 weeks. Avoid sudden or jerking movements.
- Call your doctor if the tugging does not stop or gets worse.

LEG CRAMPS

You may get leg cramps or charley horses during your pregnancy. Leg cramps usually happen while you are sleeping or early in the morning as you get out of bed. They feel like a spasm in your leg muscles. They are usually because you have an imbalance of the minerals calcium and phosphorous. You might have too much or too little of either mineral. Talk about this problem with your doctor.

- To help reduce cramps, try the following:
 - If you get a cramp, straighten your leg and point your toes up toward your knee to ease the cramp.
 - Be sure your diet contains milk, cheese, and other foods high in calcium and phosphorus.
 - Stretch your calf muscles to help with leg cramps.
 - Take a warm bath before bed.
 - Keep your legs warm.

Leg cramps can be due to an imbalance of calcium and phosphorous.

BACKACHE

- Talk with your doctor if you had back problems before you got pregnant.
- When you are pregnant, you gain weight. Your breast size increases and so does your uterus.
- All of this can cause you to have poor posture, back strain, and aches.
- To reduce or prevent backache, try the following:
 - Wear a maternity bra for extra support.
 - Wear shoes that fit well and have an arch support.
 - Sleep on your side instead of your back; use extra pillows and a firm mattress.

- Use good body movements and posture.
- Ask your doctor about support items that can help you with your backache.
- Call your doctor right away if:
 - You have a low backache (either constant, or off and on) that seems to wrap around your belly.
 - It does not go away within 1 hour after you change position or rest.
 - This could be an early sign of preterm labor.

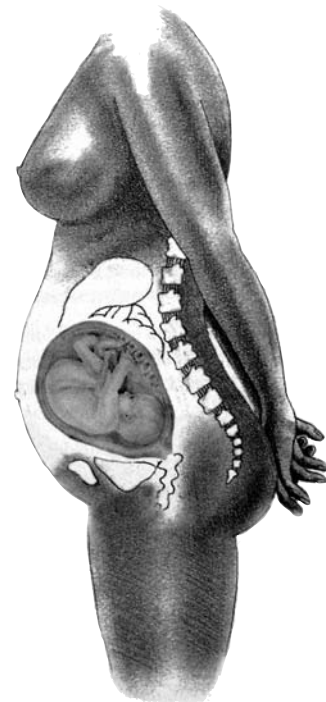
Weeks 29 to 40 - 3rd Trimester

VARICOSE VEINS

- You may see varicose veins most often in the last 3 months of pregnancy.
- They often get worse with each pregnancy.
- They are caused by the uterus pressing on the large blood vessels that carry blood from your legs back up to your heart. This pressure causes the blood flow to be slow and the veins in your legs to overfill.
- Try these tips to help ease discomfort from varicose veins and prevent them from getting worse:
 - Wear support hose (put on before getting out of bed).
 - Do not wear clothes that squeeze blood vessels in your legs, such as knee-highs.
 - Do not sit or stand in one place for a long time.
 - Do not cross your legs when you sit or while lying in bed.
 - Rest often with your legs up.

SWELLING

- Your feet, ankles, and lower legs may swell during pregnancy.
- Swelling is caused by your uterus pressing the blood vessels in your belly and pelvis. Fluid is forced out of your blood vessels and into the tissues of your legs and causes swelling.
- Try these tips to ease your discomfort and keep the swelling from getting worse:
 - Do not sit or stand for long periods of time.
 - Lie on your side, not your back.



- Rest often with your legs up.
- Do not wear clothes that fit tight or stockings with elastic tops.
- Do not wear shoes that are too tight. You might need a larger shoe size because your feet may flatten and spread.
- Choose shoes with good support and wide heels, no higher than 1½ inches.

Call your doctor if you have swelling in your ankles or feet that does not go away after rest or if your face or fingers swell.

STUFFY NOSE

- A stuffy nose during pregnancy is due to changes in your hormones.
- A humidifier or cool-mist vaporizer put in your home may make you feel better.
- Do not use nose sprays or decongestants while you are pregnant. They may raise your blood pressure.
- Talk to your doctor for more comfort tips.