



## Remedies for Minor Discomforts of Pregnancy

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***During pregnancy a woman experiences physiological changes in her body which can cause minor discomforts. Listed below are some remedies which may alleviate some of the discomforts of pregnancy. This list is intended to enhance and add to already existing information you may have and most of all, it is to help women maintain a healthy and comfortable pregnancy.***

**Back Pain** - usually lasts from 20 weeks to term

- try pelvic rocking exercise, yoga, walking, swimming
- maintain good posture while standing, walking and sitting
- avoid standing for long periods of time
- avoid slouching as this can cause the baby to get into a malposition
- elevate one foot while standing
- avoid high heels, wear flat, well supported shoes
- bend knees when lifting
- roll onto your side prior to getting up from a lying down position
- use a pillow between your legs when sleeping
- watch weight gain
- try warm bath/heating pad on low or medium setting
- use of 'prenatal cradle' to support the abdominal muscles
- physiotherapy or massage therapy may be helpful

***\* always alert your midwife if back pain persists or of any previous back injuries you may have suffered prior to the pregnancy***

**Bleeding Gums**

- use a soft tooth brush
- ensure regular dental hygiene, flossing and dental check ups
- ensure a healthy diet of fresh fruits and vegetables

**Constipation** - can last the entire pregnancy

- increase fluids, especially water
- have fluids prior to meals
- decrease dairy intake
- increase high fiber foods
- exercise such as yoga, stretching, walking

**Headaches**

- eat regularly
- increase fluids
- rest with cool cloth
- decrease stress and practice relaxation techniques

***\*consult your midwife if headaches persist***

**Heart Burn** - from 20 weeks to term

- try dry crackers
- avoid irritating foods
- eat smaller meals
- chew slowly and thoroughly
- avoid greasy foods
- reduce, discontinue or change iron supplement
- sleep propped up
- try 1 tsp of apple cider vinegar or lemon juice

***\* consult your midwife prior to taking antacids***

**Hemorrhoids** - from 24 weeks to term

- daily kegel exercises (pelvic floor muscles)
- lie down and elevate hips 10 to 15 minutes 3 times per day
- avoid constipating foods and salty foods
- ensure fluid intake is adequate (6-8 glasses of water per day)

**\* consult your midwife if hemorrhoids persist or bleed**

**Insomnia** - usually from 28 weeks to term

- exercise daily
- get plenty of fresh air
- eat meals early (full stomach = heartburn)
- avoid taking multi vitamins before bed or during the late afternoon
- avoid caffeine
- have a warm bath
- practice relaxation breathing exercises

**\* consult your midwife if insomnia is not resolving**

**Nausea and Vomiting** - usually lasts from 4 to 16 weeks

- discontinue taking prenatal vitamins with iron for the first 12 weeks
- continue taking 0.4mg of folic acid as a separate supplement during the first 12 weeks
- eat frequently, especially crackers, dry toast, cereal
- prepare foods with little odor
- avoid greasy foods
- avoid spicy foods
- take B6 - 20mg – 50mg daily
- snack just before bed
- increase rest
- try eating only one food at a time
- try eating 6 small meals rather than 3 large meals
- try ginger tea, peppermint tea, raspberry leaf tea
- increase protein and carbohydrate intake
- the use of a homeopathic remedy or acupuncture may be helpful

**\* if vomiting persists, consult your midwife immediately**

**Swelling** - usually occurs after 28 weeks

- elevate feet twice daily for 15 minutes at a time
- lie on left side when resting and sleeping
- increase water intake
- change your position frequently to enhance circulation

**\* symptoms such as headaches, blurry vision, upper right gastric pain or rapid onset of swelling should be reported to your midwife immediately**

**Varicose Veins** - from 16 weeks to term

- try maternity support hose
- try ice packs to affected areas
- exercise daily
- lie down and elevate legs 10 to 15 minutes 3 times per day
- avoid sitting or standing for long periods

**\* consult your midwife if you experience painful swelling, increased heat, redness, or tenderness**