

A Woman's Place of Fort Collins **"Morning Sickness"**

Statistics indicate that 50-90% of all pregnant women experience some degree of morning sickness. In spite of the name, morning sickness does not only happen in the morning.

There are many theories about the causes of morning sickness, but no one really knows what causes it. Theories include lowered blood sodium, rising pregnancy hormones, slower emptying of the stomach, and heightened senses. These symptoms may be mild to very strong. They usually disappear by the end of the first trimester, but occasionally last longer. It is not "all in your head."

Morning sickness does not mean that there is anything wrong with the pregnancy. Women with morning sickness may feel angry, guilty, isolated, exhausted, or ambivalent about the pregnancy. Some may even feel scared. If you are having these feelings, they're normal. Talk to friends who have "been there" or talk to your health care provider. There is no treatment that guarantees relief.

We have put together this handout with all the ideas we are aware of. You will need to experiment to see what works best for YOU. Morning sickness generally peaks by 10 weeks gestation and eases off from there. For more information, you may want to read No More Morning Sickness-A Survival Guide for Pregnant Women, by Miriam Erick, R.D., M.S. Publisher: Plume, 1993.

Here are a few ideas to try:

1. **Fresh Lemons:** You can sniff them, suck plain wedges, or eat them with a bit of sprinkled salt.
2. **Ginger:** Ginger capsules are available at most health food stores. For morning sickness, take three or four capsules upon rising each day, followed by a half cup of warm water or milk. Wait at least five minutes before getting out of bed. Whenever you feel queasy during the day, take three or four more capsules. Alternatively, you can prepare ginger tea and drink one or two cups in the morning or whenever you feel nauseated. To make ginger tea, boil four cups of water and add two Tablespoons of fresh grated ginger. Simmer for 20 minutes.
3. **Damp facecloth:** Sprinkle this with a drop of lemon or lime juice and carry it in a Ziploc bag in your purse. If you smell disagreeable odors, hold the facecloth over your nose.
4. **Raspberry Leaf, Peppermint, or Peach Leaf Tea:** Any of these herbal teas taken separately or in any combination may be effective. Drink three cups a day. Boil one cup of water and pour over one teaspoon of these herbs. Steep in a covered non-aluminum pot for five minutes.
5. **Homeopathic remedies:** These are safe in pregnancy; Sepia, Pulsatilla, BHI Nausea, and Nux Vomica. These are four of the most commonly

prescribed remedies for morning sickness. These remedies can be found at your local health food store.

6. **Sea bands:** These are similar to a tennis sweat band, but have a plastic bead that is attached to the wrist band. The bead presses on an acupressure point in the wrist that helps control nausea. They can be found at most drug stores in the section near the motion sickness remedies.
7. **Food:** Ask yourself what food or beverage would ease your nausea? Something salty, sour, bitter, tart, sweet, crunchy, soft, smooth, fruity, bland, hot, cold, etc. Don't be afraid if junk food appeals to you sometimes. A study showed that many pregnant women got relief from morning sickness by eating potato chips and drinking lemonade.
8. **Sip Classic Coke:** (1 ounce per hour) at the onset of nausea and throughout the day.
9. **Don't get an empty stomach:** Eat about six small meals per day, rather than three large ones.
10. **Bedtime snack:** A glass of milk and a bran muffin is a good snack; it's high in protein and complex carbohydrates.
11. **Take 25-50mg of Vitamin B6:** Take it once to three times a day as needed. Foods that contain Vitamin B6 include avocado, bananas, watermelon, prunes, beans (lima, lentils, and soybeans), broccoli brussel sprouts, corn, collard greens, peas, whole wheat flour, brown rice, wheat bran, peanuts, and meat (beef, pork, liver, and chicken).
12. **Drink plenty of liquids:** Fruit or vegetable juices, soups, broths, or bouillons. Frozen fluids may help too. Fruity popsicles or fruit sorbets are slow to melt and don't dill up the stomach too fast. Eat solids with high water content, like lettuce, melons, grapes, berries, and citrus fruits.
13. **Get extra sleep and relaxation (1-2 hours) every day:** Both emotional and physical fatigue make nausea worse.
14. **Keep a snack by your bedside and eat upon waking:** Wait 15-20 minutes before getting out of bed. Try whole grain crackers, saltines, rice cakes, dried fruit, and raisins.
15. **The "BRATT" diet may help:** bananas, rice, applesauce, tea, and toast.