



Palmetto Women's Health, PC

Loren B. Frankel, MD, FACOG

1300 Hospital Drive, Suite 380
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Phone--(843) 884-2206
Fax--(843) 881-0255

Common Discomforts of Pregnancy

NOTE:

1. If any of these discomforts occur, or any others, they should be reported to us at your next visit. In addition, we will want to know what measures you have taken to relieve the discomforts.
2. Please call if these measures have not been effective or if your condition worsens.
3. This list does not apply to nursing mothers.
4. Never exceed the recommended dosage on any medication, over-the-counter or prescription, without a physician's recommendation.

Problem	Causes	Treatments
Constipation	Slower passage of food. Pressure from uterus on colon. Hormones cause bowels to relax.	High bulk diet, i.e.: bran cereal, raw fruits & vegetables. Establish a time for elimination. Lots of liquids, especially fruit juices. Bulk laxatives such as <i>Metamucil</i> , <i>Bran Lax</i> , or <i>Peridiam</i> are available over the counter. Use <i>Senekot</i> or <i>Senekot-S</i> if you go more than three days without a BM; use <i>Colace</i> three times a day to soften your stools if necessary.
Cough	Cold or Flu	Same as "sinus trouble", also <i>Benylin</i> , <i>Robitussin</i> , or <i>Triaminic</i> cough syrup. Any over-the-counter cough drops are fine.
Diarrhea, Nausea, Vomiting	Virus, change in eating habits, or travel.	<i>Pepto Bismol</i> or <i>Kaopectate</i> for diarrhea. Clear liquids, i.e.: sips of Coke, Ginger ale, Gatorade, weak tea, crushed ice, or chicken noodle soup. Plain crackers for 24 hours. Let us know if these don't work and it persists past 24 hours. Once you keep down liquids, advance your diet very slowly. <u>As long as you can tolerate liquids you and the baby will not become dehydrated or malnourished.</u>
Dizziness or light headedness.	Pressure on major blood vessels by enlarging uterus. Hormonal changes.	If lying down, turn to left side. Avoid lying flat on your back. If shopping, etc., stop what you're doing and sit down with your head between your knees or as far down as possible. . . until the feeling passes.
Headaches	Hormonal changes. Tension. Colds, flu, allergies, viruses, etc.	<i>Tylenol Extra-Strength</i> every four hours as needed. Take these early before the pain becomes severe. If you wait until it gets bad the <i>Tylenol</i> may not work. Resting in a quiet place may help also. If this does not work, please call the nurse.
Heartburn	Increased stomach acid. Delayed emptying time of stomach. Reflux of stomach contents into esophagus.	Bland diet, frequent small meals—eat slowly, don't rush. Two tablespoons <i>Maalox</i> or <i>Mylanta</i> 30 minutes after each meal and at bedtime or up to every 2 hours if needed. Do not lie flat after just eating. May use <i>Tums</i> or <i>Roloids</i> . Liquids may work better than tablets.
Hemorrhoids	Constipation or pressure from uterus on veins to rectum.	Avoid constipation. Drink plenty of fluids (at least 6-8 glasses a day). Sitz baths (soaking in 2-3 inches of very warm water) several times a day. <i>Tucks</i> or witch hazel compresses (may chill in the refrigerator). <i>Anusol</i> or <i>Wyanoids</i> cream or suppositories, available over the counter.
Insomnia	Pressure of baby on blood vessels & nerves. Hormonal influences. Concern about changes, baby, labor & delivery, etc.	Change position; try putting a pillow between your knees and side-sleeping. Get up and walk around for a brief period, read a book & try drinking warm milk. Good communications with partner, family and friends.

Leg Muscle Cramps	Pressure of uterus on vessels to legs. Slowed circulation. Are you getting at least 3 servings of milk or milk products a day?	Avoid pointing toes and wear low-heeled shoes. Try position changes. Have partner massage muscles.
Nausea	High hormonal levels. Increased stomach acid. Stomach empties slowly. Low blood sugar.	Frequent small meals, bland diet, eat a small snack (crackers & cheese) before going to bed & a small snack before rising (crackers, dry cereal or toast). Though no anti-nausea medication is specifically approved for pregnancy, Dramamine 25 mg. with Vitamin B6 25 mg. three times a day is not known to increase risk based on available data.
Nose Bleed	Increase in small blood vessels in nose due to increase in blood volume due to pregnancy. Irritation or dry atmosphere.	Apply pressure to affected side & hold until bleeding stops. May also use ice packs. Use a humidifier or vaporizer at night. Do not blow nose forcefully.
Pressure—Low Abdominal & Back Pain or Pain in Sides (without temperature or spotting)	Pressure from baby. Stretching of round ligaments that usually hold uterus in place. Muscular pain.	Heating pad (on low). Very warm tub baths. Bed rest or rest with legs elevated. Tylenol or any brand of acetaminophen as directed. Firm mattress. Comfortable, low-heeled shoes.
Shortness of Breath	Growing baby pressing up into abdominal organs and thoracic cavity. Less breathing space as baby grows, especially with activity.	Slow down, breathe deeply.
Sinus Trouble, Cold and Stuffy Nose	Allergies, virus, or flu. Hormones can cause increased secretions and softening of mucous membranes.	<i>Tylenol</i> (every 2-4 hours) for aches and pains. <i>Sudafed</i> . <i>Afrin</i> or <i>Neosinephrine</i> nasal spray according to package directions. NOTE: Colds in pregnancy tend to last longer than when you're not pregnant. (10-14 days)
Sore Throat	Cough, cold virus.	Same as for colds, also warm salt water gargles 3-4 times a day & throat lozenges. <i>Chloraseptic Spray</i> . <i>Tylenol</i> or any brand acetaminophen products. If temperature goes higher than 100.4 degrees please call us. Any over-the-counter cough drops are fine.
Swelling Ankles or Hand Numbness	Increased fluid due to pregnancy. (Also see varicose veins).	At least 3 hours of "off your feet" rest a day. Drink water rather than soft drinks. Avoid pork and watch salt intake. Wear support stockings—especially if you are on your feet or have to sit for long periods. If so, try to lie down for a half hour or so during lunch when possible.
Urinating Frequently	Pressure of uterus on bladder.	Avoid holding back if you feel the need to void. Avoid drinking large amounts of fluids within 2-3 hours of bedtime. Instead, get required fluid intake earlier in the day. NOTE: Be sure to report any burning, blood in urine, fever, or low back pain when associated with urinary frequency.
Varicose Veins	Pressure from uterus on veins. Softening & enlargement of veins due to hormones. Tight knee socks or knee-hi's, rolled stockings, or prolonged sitting or standing.	Frequent rest periods with legs elevated. Maternity support stockings. Avoid crossing legs.