

Coping with Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

Information for Women — Nutrition Services

www.healthinfo.org.nz (a Canterbury health information website)

Introduction

Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy can occur at any time of the day or night. The major triggers for nausea are:

THIRST – drink plenty of fluid

It is important to keep drinking, even if you cannot eat.

HUNGER – keep eating

Try to eat small snacks instead of meals.

TIREDNESS – rest often

Rest as much as you can as tiredness will trigger nausea.

SMELLS – avoid certain smells

Avoid smells that trigger your nausea (eg. cooking and kitchen smells, perfumes, hair products)

Keep taking your anti-nausea medication and vitamins.

To help relieve the symptoms try to keep drinking ...

- Drink fluids you like and drink often.
- Try to drink small amounts (¼ to ½ glass) every 15-30 minutes.
- Suck ice cubes or ice blocks.
- Try watered down juice or cordial.
- Try mixing together 2 tsp of Fresh Up juice with 150 mL water, 1 tsp sugar and a pinch of salt. Sip throughout the day.
- Try flavoured milk, Complan or Sustagen.
- Try a milk drink or milky Milo before going to bed.
- If you wake in the night, have a drink.
- Use a water bottle or drink with a straw.
- Keep fluid with you at all times.

Try some of the following ideas for eating...

- Keep eating – hunger can make nausea worse. Nibbling every 15-30 minutes may help. Keep a snack box with you at all times.
- Try sucking boiled lollies or ice blocks.
- Try a snack before getting out of bed.
- Try a late night supper snack including protein such as cheese, yoghurt or milk.
- If smells are a problem, cold foods may be tolerated better (eg. jelly, ice cream, or tinned pears or peaches).
- Try salty snacks like crisps, crackers, pretzels.
- Try mashed potato, pasta, or rice.
- Ginger helps some women (ginger biscuits, ginger tea, ginger ale, ginger tablets).
- Avoid smells which act as a trigger (eg. perfumes, soap, cooking and cleaning liquids). Ventilate the kitchen to decrease food smells.
- Get plenty of rest – ask for help with childcare from family and friends. Slow down and if possible reduce working hours.
- Try and take the vitamins and anti-nausea medication you have been prescribed
- It is really important to keep drinking even if you are unable to eat.
- You will begin to feel better. Most women will improve by week 12-14 of pregnancy.
- Once you feel well again it is important that you increase the variety and amount of food in your diet.

For further support

Ask your midwife or doctor about a referral to the Dietitians at Christchurch Women's Hospital