

# Living with Nausea During Pregnancy

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## ***Eat What You Can:***

The baby will get the nutrients s/he needs, so eat what appeals to you. Be open to trying some new foods.

## ***Use preventive measures in addition to prescription medication:***

They will reduce the need for frequent medication, so if you end up needing a prescription, continue these efforts.

## ***Take prenatal vitamins strategically:***

If they trigger nausea, take them with the biggest meal of the day, or before you go to bed so you sleep through the nausea. Temporarily switching to a chewable supplement (with at least 400mcg folic acid) is also helpful.

## ***Eat small meals often:***

Eat slowly and chew food completely every 2-3 hours. Include complex carbohydrates (bread, pasta, rice)—whole grain if you can.

## ***Keep snacks handy:***

Keep whole grain crackers by your bedside, so if you wake up hungry or nauseated, there's something within reach to settle your stomach—don't even raise your head, if you can avoid it, while munching...until things settle. Keep snacks like pretzels and almonds in your bag and desk so you have something to nibble on if stuck at work or in traffic. **Avoid hunger!**

## ***Dental care is important:***

Some women find teeth-brushing triggers nausea or the gag reflex. Brush and floss frequently with water (plain or lemon/mint flavored) if toothpaste is a trigger; if it's the brushing that bothers, avoid the tongue and back of the mouth and use an antiseptic rinse to cover those areas.

### ***Avoid strong smell and strong foods:***

Spicy, fried and fatty foods are difficult to digest. Strong smells can trigger nausea so try to prepare simple meals or ask your partner or friend to prepare them for you.

### ***Sip liquid:***

Water or sparkling/seltzer water (add mint or lemon/lime), tea (lemon, ginger, peppermint, chamomile, red raspberry—try it at room temperature or just slightly cool), clear soup, even cola or a sports drink like Recharge. Avoid artificial sweeteners found in many flavored waters and drinks.

### ***Vitamin B supplement:***

Take B6 tablets at 25-50mg twice daily (they are small and easy to swallow). Don't exceed 100mg in 24 hours.

### ***Combine B6 and Doxylamine:***

If B6 doesn't work alone, combine it with the anti-histamine 'doxylamine'. It's found in over-the-counter sleep aids like Unisom and has been safely used in pregnancy for decades. Take 10mg twice a day with the B6—about ½ of a Unisom TABLET (not 'capsule'—it's a different med altogether!) each dose.

### ***Ginger:***

Dried ginger capsules taken 2-4 times daily or a medicinal grade ginger tea sipped on through the day—such as Traditional Medicinals brand where the label describes a ginger content of over 1000mg per cup. Maximum daily dose of ginger is 1500mg. The tea can be brewed strong, then diluted with lemonade or tart juice and sipped on through the day.

### ***Acupressure:***

The "Sea Bands" can be found at most pharmacies, and should be placed before nausea is severe to be effective.

### ***Aromatherapy:***

Scents like citrus, mint and lavender can reduce the severity of nausea episodes. Find a fragrance that is pleasing to you, and keep it handy in the form of drops or spray. Pure essential oils are more effective than artificial scents like room sprays and candles.

### ***Acupuncture and massage:***

Find practitioners experienced in treating pregnant women, and you may see improvement in symptoms for days after treatment.

# Checklist: Stomach-friendly foods

## **Citrus:**

Lemon/lime/tangerine in any form—drinks, sucking candies (Lemonheads & Jolly Ranchers), fresh fruit

## **Ginger:**

Candies, tea, ginger ale, even pickled

## **Mint:**

Tea, candies, breath freshener

## **Frozen grapes or berries**

## **Pasta, toast, bagels**

## **Salty snacks:**

Chips, pretzels, popcorn, crackers

## **Applesauce:**

Add ½ tsp of cinnamon—an excellent nausea remedy for adults and children

## **Cucumbers**

## **Watermelon**