

## Vomiting All the Time

*I feel nauseated all the time - not just in the morning - throughout the day, is this normal? I am already four months pregnant.*

Nausea is a common symptom in pregnancy, and occurs in more than three quarters of women in the first trimester (first 13-14 weeks) of pregnancy. Half of these women had associated vomiting.

"Morning sickness", a term commonly used to describe symptoms of nausea and vomiting during pregnancy, is a misnomer. Only 15 per cent of pregnancy woman have symptoms confined to the morning.

In severe situations, the pregnant woman can become severely dehydrated and losing weight, requiring admission for a drip to be inserted to provide

replacement of water lost. Such symptoms tend to resolve at 16-20 weeks of pregnancy. If it continues beyond 20 weeks of pregnancy, it is important to see your doctor to exclude other important causes of nausea and vomiting such as gastric ulcer disease, overactive thyroid glands. Occasionally, the symptoms of sickness continue beyond 20 weeks and persist for the remainder of the pregnancy.

General supportive measures will include having frequent but small portions of drinks and food, and avoiding caffeine and alcohol. Ginger and acupuncture have shown some benefits in research studies, with no harmful effects on pregnancy demonstrated. In some cases, drugs may be prescribed to treat nauseated symptoms.

I would advise that you consult your doctor should the symptoms persist.

This month's questions were answered by:  
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