

Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea is when you feel like throwing up. Vomiting is when you do throw up. They are both signs of morning sickness. It is usually due to changes in **hormones**. Low blood sugar levels also cause it.

Despite its name, morning sickness can happen any time of day. It can even happen in the evening. Morning sickness usually begins around the 6th week. For most women, it ends after the first **trimester**. For some, it lasts longer. For a few, it can last the whole pregnancy.

Upset stomach and throwing up can also be caused by:

- ❑ A virus in the intestines. Diarrhea can go along with this.
- ❑ Spoiled food
- ❑ Eating or drinking too much

Questions to Ask

After vomiting, do you have any signs of **dehydration**? (This is when your body loses too much water.)

- Feeling confused, light-headed, dizzy, or weak
- Passing very little or no urine
- Extreme dryness of mouth and eyes
- Wrinkled skin that doesn't spring back when you pinch it
- Rapid pulse. Fast breathing.

YES



Get Medical Care Now

NO

More questions in next column

With vomiting, do you have these signs?

- The vomit is bloody-colored or looks like coffee grounds.
- Extreme swelling of the feet, hands, ankles, or face
- Severe headache, feeling dizzy, blurred or double vision
- Severe pain in the top right part of your **abdomen**
- Constant pain anywhere in the abdomen

YES



Get Medical Care Now

NO

Do you have any of these symptoms with vomiting?

- Fever and shaking chills
- Pain in one or both sides of your back
- Burning when you pass urine
- Bloody or cloudy urine
- Pain in your bladder area

YES



Call Health Care Provider

NO

Is throwing up so severe that you can't keep fluids down?

YES



Call Health Care Provider

NO

Are you throwing up medicine that your health care provider has prescribed?

YES



Call Health Care Provider

NO



Use Self-Care

See Self-Care Tips on next page

Nausea and Vomiting, Continued

Self-Care Tips

For morning sickness:

- ❑ Keep crackers or dry cereal by your bed. Eat a few crackers or a handful of dry cereal in bed. Do this before you lift your head up in the morning.
- ❑ Get up and out of bed slowly. If you can, sit in bed for a half-hour before you get up.
- ❑ Use these tips to keep your blood sugar from getting too low:
 - Eat small regular meals and snacks through the day. Focus on foods high in carbohydrates. Examples: whole grain breads and cereals, potatoes, pasta. More examples: rice, beans and other legumes, vegetables, fruits.
 - Have a good source of protein at each meal. Examples: low-fat milk, yogurt, low-fat cheese, dry beans, dry peas.
 - Have a snack before you go to bed at night. Have one if you wake up at night.
 - Avoid foods with high sugar content.
 - Don't drink alcohol.
- ❑ Don't smoke.
- ❑ Don't eat fried or greasy foods. These foods have a lot of fat. Fat stays in the stomach for a long time. This can lead to nausea.
- ❑ Don't eat spicy foods.
- ❑ Don't take any medicine without your health care provider's okay.
- ❑ Take your **prenatal vitamins** (vitamin pills) with meals. This helps prevent stomach upset. Your doctor may prescribe PremesisRx[®]. This is a vitamin that helps nausea.
- ❑ Ask your health care provider about taking ginger and in what form.
- ❑ Write down the times when your stomach is upset and when you throw up. These may happen only after you eat certain foods. Or they may happen with certain smells. Once you know what they are, you can avoid them.
- ❑ Stay away from smoke and smoky rooms. Even stay away from cooking smells.
- ❑ To get rid of cooking smells and odors:
 - Open the windows.
 - Run fans in the house. Use the exhaust fan on the stove.
 - Use a portable air cleaner or air purifier.
- ❑ Get plenty of rest.
- ❑ Discuss any home remedies with your health care provider. Do this to make sure they are safe.
- ❑ Ask your health care provider about a relief band. That's a wrist band that helps with an upset stomach and throwing up.
- ❑ If the Self-Care Tips bring no relief, call your health care provider. He or she can prescribe medicines. Sometimes, IV fluids are needed.