

## MORNING SICKNESS DURING PREGNANCY

“Morning Sickness” refers to nausea during pregnancy, which is usually confined to mornings, but may happen throughout the day or just in evenings.

This condition consists of variable degrees of nausea, with or without vomiting, most likely occurring during the first 12-14 weeks of pregnancy (first trimester). These symptoms may be very mild in some, and almost disabling in others. Often, it is the first sign that someone is pregnant. Most women experience some symptoms of morning sickness between the two extremes.

This condition is probably associated with the drastic hormonal changes that must take place to permit normal growth of the new pregnancy. Progesterone is a hormone which causes relaxation of smooth muscles (over which you have no control) found in the blood vessels and walls of the intestinal tract. Progesterone and other hormones slow the emptying of the stomach and movement of the intestines (therefore, also causing constipation). They may also have a direct action on the center in the brain that controls nausea and vomiting.

### What you can do:

Stay as active as your strength and sense of well-being allows. Take regular rest periods, but do not just stay in bed because of nausea.

Keeping fluids down is the most important thing. Sometimes Gatorade or watered-down juice sits better than plain water, but try to drink 6-8 big glasses or fluids per day. You don't need to drink it all at once, and often it is easier to drink ½ cup every 15-20 minutes. Wait a bit after drinking before trying to eat something.

Often, keeping something in your stomach helps with the nausea. Eat frequently during the day – as often as every 1-2 hours. Avoid large meals. Make your frequent snacks consist of high-protein foods such as celery spread with peanut butter, nuts, cheese and crackers, yogurt, granola bars, plain turkey or chicken.

Avoid junk foods which may be high in fat and salt, but low in nutrition and not last long for energy.

Keep crackers by your bedside for early morning or late night snacks.

Avoid cooking if nauseated. Avoid exposure to strong smells. Some people find food/drinks with ginger, citrus or mint are helpful.

### Over-the-counter Meds to try:

Vitamin B6 – 50 mg three times a day	Unisom (try a half-tablet during the day)
Dramamine	Motion sickness wrist bands
Tums	

\*\*\*If you are not able to hold anything down for 12-24 hours (including fluids), please call the office or go to the Emergency Room for evaluation and treatment. Sometimes, IV fluids and medicines are needed for treatment. There are also many prescription medications that we can use to help with nausea and vomiting during early pregnancy.