

COMMON PREGNANCY DISCOMFORTS

COMPLAINT	CAUSE	RECOMMENDATIONS
ABDOMINAL (MENSTRUAL-TYPE) CRAMPING	The ligaments that support the growing uterus are stretching. The uterus may contract, as it begins growing and stretching.	FRIST TRIMESTER: Tylenol every 4-6 hours. Call our office if severe pain and/or bleeding occurs. This type of cramping often occurs more in subsequent pregnancies. SECOND OR THIRD TRIMESTER: Rest and increase fluids. Call our office if they become regular (more than 6 per hour) or very intense.
ALLERGIES (SEASONAL)	The hormonal changes can increase nasal sensitivity.	Try to avoid the allergen. Claritin and Zyrtec are safe. Try saline nasal drops/spray.
BACKACHE	The increasing uterus size causes a shift in the center of gravity and posture.	Try heat/ice for 15 minutes. Avoid lifting, bending, heeled shoes. Wear a supportive bra, stretch, wear an external abdominal binder, and/or Tylenol. SECOND OR THIRD TRIMESTER: Backache that comes and goes regularly may be associated with contractions. Please call our office if you are less than 36 weeks and having backache that feels different than usual.
BLEEDING AFTER INTERCOURSE	The increase in blood supply to the cervix.	Use a water-based lubricant to reduce friction and discomfort. If bleeding becomes heavier or is accompanied by severe abdominal cramps, you should call our office immediately.
BLEEDING GUMS	The high level of estrogen increases gum sensitivity.	Practice good oral hygiene. Use a soft toothbrush and floss regularly. Try warm saline mouthwashes. If bleeding persists, please contact your dentist.
BRAXTON-HICKS CONTRACTIONS	These are sporadic uterine contractions and probably occur to increase the tone of the uterine muscles.	Empty your bladder frequently. Rest on your left side and/or walk to relax. Call our office if they become regular (more than 6 per hour).

DIFFICULTY BREATHING	The enlarging uterus presses up against your diaphragm.	Avoid restrictive clothing, use pillows to elevate your back, decrease exercise, and rest. Call our office if it becomes persistent.
CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME	The fluid retention causes compression of certain nerves.	Wear a wrist splint while sleeping. This usually resolves post-partum.
SKIN CHANGES	Estrogen and progesterone hormones have melanocyte-stimulating effects.	Avoid prolonged sun exposure and wear sunscreen.
CONSTIPATION	Progesterone relaxes the smooth muscle, decreasing intestinal contractions. This is also a common side effect of iron contained in prenatal vitamins.	Try drinking 8 glasses of water daily and warm liquids in the morning. Eat prunes, a high fiber diet, exercise, Colace 200mg per day or Metamucil 4-7g per day.
DIARRHEA	Also caused by hormonal changes affecting intestinal contractions.	Increase fluid intake and drink liquids high in sugar to avoid dehydration, avoid dairy, eat rice, bananas, toast, or try Imodium. Call our office if it becomes persistent/severe.
DIZZINESS	The enlarged uterus compresses the vena cava. Also caused by nausea/vomiting and blood sugar level fluctuations.	Avoid rapid breathing, slowly change positions, lay on your left side, eat regularly throughout the day, and increase your water intake. Call our office if it becomes persistent.
FATIGUE	Caused by a decrease in the metabolic rate, hormone level changes, and sleep disturbances.	Take frequent rest periods, avoid exercise before bed and caffeine. Exercise in the morning.
FLATULENCE (GAS)	Occurs from decreased gastric movement and increased intestinal pressure.	Exercise. Avoid gas-producing foods and straws. Try taking Mylicon 40-80mg as directed.
HEADACHES	Caused by stress, increased blood volume, low blood sugar or hormone level changes.	Rest in a dark room, drink fluids, try relaxation techniques, massage, hot/cold compresses. Try Tylenol 325-650mg every 4-6 hours. Please call if your headache is not relieved by Tylenol.

HEARTBURN	Hormonal influence relaxes the esophageal sphincter and decreases gastric motility.	Eat small frequent meals. Avoid foods that bother you. Try Tums, Zantac or Pepcid.
HEMORRHOIDS	Straining during bowel movements cause veins in the rectum to become inflamed and swollen.	Eat a high fiber diet, bran, whole grains and fruit. Try sitz baths, and Preparation H or Tucks.
INSOMNIA	Caused by anxiety and/or being uncomfortable.	Try a warm bath and relaxation techniques. Use a body pillow, avoid caffeine, and try Tylenol PM or Benadryl.
LEG CRAMPS	The uterus puts pressure on pelvic blood vessels. Also caused by decreased circulation and/or dehydration.	Straighten the affected leg and point the heel, try leg elevation several times daily, a diet high in calcium and low in phosphate, exercise, and massage. Try adding Potassium, Magnesium and increase water intake.
MOOD SWINGS	Occurs from constant fluctuation of hormone levels.	Make time for yourself, rest, exercise, communicate needs, do enjoyable activities. Please call our office if your mood swings are persistent or if they are affecting your normal daily routine.
NASAL CONGESTION	The hormone changes increase nasal mucosa sensitivity.	Use a humidifier, drink fluids, try saline nasal drops/spray and gargle salt water.
NAUSEA/VOMITING	Occurs from changing hormone levels, the enlarging uterus, and a high sensitivity to smells and tastes.	Avoid spicy, greasy foods. Eat small frequent high protein meals, keep crackers, popcorn, or toast at your bedside. Try lemon juice or drops, Vitamin B6 50-100mg per day, Unisom ½ tab.
NOSE BLEEDS	The high estrogen levels increase nasal sensitivity. Also caused by dry air.	Loosen the clothing around your neck. Sit with your head tilted forward and pinch your nostrils for 10-15 minutes. Avoid overheated air, excessive exertion and nasal sprays. Blow your nose gently.
PAIN WITH INTERCOURSE	Occurs from pelvic and vaginal congestion, uterus enlargement or anxiety.	Try changing positions, adding lubrication, longer foreplay and more communication.

ROUND LIGAMENT
PAIN
(lower abdomen
and/or groin cramping
and pulling)

The ligaments that support the
enlarging uterus are stretching.

Flex your knees to your abdomen.
Try warm baths.