

# Common Discomforts and Comfort Measures



Possible Discomfort	Comfort Measure
Nausea	The increase in hormone production can cause nausea. Eat small, frequent meals of crackers or dry toast. Drink small, frequent amounts and not at meal times. Do not lie down after eating. Get out of bed slowly. Rest!
Sleep Difficulties (Insomnia/Fatigue)	Insomnia can be caused by a number of things. If you are having difficulty finding a comfortable position, use pillows to help arrange an acceptable sleeping position. Anxiety and having too much on your mind can also cause insomnia. Practice deep breathing and meditation and let others help out if you feel overwhelmed. Listen to your body. If you are feeling fatigued, this is a message from your body that you need to rest! Let others take care of everyday chores.
Frequent Urination	With the growth of your baby, there is less space for urine in your bladder. Limit fluid intake before bedtime to limit the number of bathroom trips to empty your bladder.
Constipation/Hemorrhoids	The increase in the progesterone hormone slows digestion in the stomach and intestines. Drink plenty of fluids. Eat a high fiber diet with lots of fruits and vegetables. Exercise regularly. It is important to avoid constipation which can lead to hemorrhoids which may result from straining during bowel movements or from increased pressure on the veins during pregnancy.
Heartburn	Just like your bladder, your stomach has less room to accommodate your food intake. Eat small, frequent meals. Drink in between meals instead of during. Do not eat right before bedtime. Avoid spicy and fatty foods, coffee, carbonated drinks and chocolate. Eat slowly and chew your food well. Sit up after eating. Use pillows at night to prop yourself up.
Nasal congestion	Increased blood volume causes the membranes in your nose to swell. Increase your fluid intake. A humidifier may help increase the moisture in your home if you are also experiencing nasal dryness in addition to the congestion.
Shortness of Breath	With the growth of your baby, your lungs have less room to expand. Maintain good posture. Avoid sleeping on your back. Prop yourself up with pillows or sleep in a recliner. Climb stairs slowly.
Swelling	With the added weight of the pregnancy, your circulation is decreased. Drink plenty of fluids. Elevate your legs whenever possible. Exercise regularly. Lie on your side when sleeping and place pillows between your legs.
Round Ligament Pain	Round ligaments hold the uterus in place. As your baby grows, these ligaments get stretched and can cause you pain. Bring your knee as close to your chest as possible and slowly extend it. A warm bath or shower may help.
Leg Cramps	Try straightening your leg and pointing your toes toward your head. Rotate foot in a circle to relieve cramps. Practice stretching exercises 2 to 3 times each day, especially before bedtime. This will help to prevent leg cramps. Increase intake of milk products.
Backache	Since you are carrying additional weight out front, your body compensates by arching and curving your back inward. Walk with your back straight and avoid "the waddle." Wear low, rubber soled shoes. Take breaks and rest your back. Use a small pillow or rolled towel in the lower part of your back when sitting down or driving your car. Practice appropriate back exercises. Avoid heavy lifting.
Sciatica	Your growing baby may put pressure on the sciatic nerve causing you pain. Pregnancy massage may provide relief.
Loose and Aching Joints	The release of hormones during pregnancy softens the cartilage joining the pubic bone in front of the pelvis. You may have a sense of achiness throughout your body. Pregnancy massage may provide relief.