



Common Discomforts of Pregnancy

There are many changes that occur during the nine months of pregnancy, some of which result in minor, yet bothersome, discomforts. Some of these discomforts can be relieved by doing things differently. Your physicians may have further suggestions, be sure to ask about anything that is bothering you.

Discomfort	Cause	Remedy
Breathlessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure of the growing baby on abdominal organs pushing up against the diaphragm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain good posture for maximum breathing space Use Tailor Reach exercise. While sleeping, raise head and shoulders on pillows “Lightening” during late pregnancy will bring relief.
Heartburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pressure of growing baby on stomach. Stomach empties more slowly during pregnancy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give stomach more room by using good posture. Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Avoid greasy or highly spiced foods and coffee. Chew gum. Take a tablespoon of cream ½ hour before meals (this won’t help if heartburn is already present). Avoid eating/drinking before lying down. Sleep propped up on pillows Only take antacids on doctor’s orders
Constipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During pregnancy movement of food through intestines is slowed so more water is absorbed by body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of liquids and high-fiber foods. Regular exercise (such as walking). Drink 3 glasses of cool water at 5-minute intervals upon rising. Then drink a glass of fruit juice with breakfast. Make sure your diet includes plenty of Vitamin B found in wheat germ, liver, whole grains, brewer’s yeast.
Hemorrhoids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarged uterus pressing on veins and interfering with circulation. Aggravated by constipation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid constipation and straining. When sitting on toilet, assume a semi-squatting position by putting feet up on a stool. Relax pelvic floor. Practice good posture. Improve circulation by doing Kegels regularly. Easier to prevent than to cure.
Leg Cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarged uterus presses on nerves, interferes with circulation. Too little calcium and too much phosphorus in diet, or poor utilization of these minerals. Fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve circulation by using good posture, elevating legs frequently and exercise (ankle and leg circles). Flex feet when stretching to relieve cramps. Eat plenty of dairy products, eat fewer high-phosphorus foods (pop, snack foods, processed meats). Never massage a cramped muscle – it makes the cramp worse and may cause tenderness that can last for days.
Swelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluid retention due to normal pregnancy combined with decreased circulation. Most common in hot weather. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movement and exercise improves circulation. Elevate legs & hips often for short periods. Avoid lying on your back. Avoid excessive sodium. Drink adequate fluids.