

PREGNANCY BLUES

TIMES WELLNESS DISCUSSES SOME COMMON DISCOMFORTS DURING PREGNANCY AND WHAT YOU COULD DO TO AVOID THEM

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Pregnancy is often associated with problems, some simple; some require medical attention and specialist care. The anatomical and physiological changes in pregnancy are associated with what are perceived by many as minor disorders or 'nuisance' of pregnancy. Majority of these complaints are trivial in medical terms but may cause considerable discomfort and distress to many pregnant women.

Nausea and vomiting

Very common problem of early pregnancy and can result in the first trimester being viewed as a miserable time. This is perhaps the first symptom found in pregnant women. It tends to be at 4-6 weeks of pregnancy and peaks at 8-12 weeks and resolves by 20 weeks. Rare but few may vomit throughout the pregnancy. Mainly due to high hormonal levels. Treatment options are- avoiding offensive foods and odours, taking small frequent meals, avoiding iron supplements, adequate fluid intake between but not with meals. If vomiting is severe and you feel exhausted, consult your doctor.



Constipation

This is because pregnancy hormones can slow down the muscles in bowel leading to constipation. And in late pregnancy this is aggravated by the pressure from the enlarged uterus, and from iron supplements. Measures that help are: high fibre diet, drinking plenty of water / fluids and regular exercise.

Low back pain

Common in pregnancy because of maternal weight gain and hormonal changes that lead to loosening of ligaments and water retention in tissues. Often worse at night. To prevent it: maintain good posture, wear comfortable flat heeled shoes, use firm mattress, and avoid heavy weight lifting.

Tingling and numbness

A growing uterus may press on the nerves going to your legs. This may cause tingling in the legs and toes. And at times there is a complaint of numbness in hand and fingers in the morning. This is due to compression of nerves by water logging. Measures that can help are: reassurance and physiotherapy.

Haemorrhoids (piles)

Can be troublesome and are aggravated by pregnancy associated constipation. They may itch, ache or feel sore and may bleed at times. Measures that can help are: increase fibre in diet and increase fluid intake.

Varicosities

Common in pregnancy and

cause no harm. They are due to pressure of pregnant uterus on pelvic veins. Measures to be taken are - elevation of legs, exercising, avoiding long period of standing or sitting. It resolves on its own after delivery. If troublesome consult your doctor.

Urinary problems

Urinary frequency is noticed since early pregnancy and in latter half of pregnancy there can be some degree of urine 'leak' on coughing or sneezing. These are due to hyper dynamic circulation and supra normal urine production by kidneys. Measures to be taken are- consult a doctor when there is any pain or scalding when passing urine and reassurance as it resolves after delivery.

Pregnancy is physically demanding and can cause discomforts. Talk to your clinician about your concerns. While, most of pregnancy-related discomforts cannot be avoided; but they can guide you to relieve some of them.

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HEART BURN

Another common problem in pregnancy. Mediated partly by elevated hormonal levels and later by growing baby pressing on the stomach. It is a burning sensation in chest accompanied by a bitter fluid in the mouth. Measures that will help are- small frequent meals, avoiding bending soon after eating, sleeping in a more propped up position.