

**PREGNANCY: Approved non-prescription medications and other helps to use during pregnancy**

<b><u>Pain</u></b> Tylenol(acetaminophen) use for aches, pains, & headaches Do NOT use Aspirin      Advil Aleve        Motrin	<b><u>Antihistamines</u></b> After the first 12 weeks you may take Benadryl      Claritin Chlortrimiton   Dimetapp Zyrtec Avoid antihistamines during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy	<b><u>Heartburn-Indigestion-Gas</u></b> Gas-X            Maalox Mylanta          Pepcid-AC Prilosec OTC    Roloids Tagamet        Tums Zantac Eat small more frequent meals; avoid spicy or greasy foods
<b><u>Cough/Colds</u></b> Robitussin DM Vicks vapor rub Throat lozenges Gargle with salt water Rest Drink 10 or more glasses of fluids Call if fever 101 or more	<b><u>Decongestants</u></b> Pseudoephedrine Sudafed Robitussin CF Tavist D Ocean Mist saline nasal spray Xlear –all natural nasal spray available at a health food store	<b><u>Hemorrhoids</u></b> Anusol HC Preparation H Tucks pads Hydrocortisone cream Heat or ice Soak in a warm bath Avoid constipation
<b><u>Diarrhea</u></b> Imodium AD Kaopectate Take only clear liquids for 24 hours. Follow BRAT diet (bananas, rice, applesauce, toast) until no diarrhea; avoid milk products until no diarrhea for 24 hours	<b><u>Constipation</u></b> Increase fiber intake Drink 10 – 12 glasses of non-caffeinated liquids ½ cup cooked, steel-cut oats daily Benifiber Colase Citrucel Metamucil Milk of Magnesia	<b><u>Toothache</u></b> Orajel Tylenol See a dentist – ok to have cavities filled; ok to have novacaine; delay xrays until after delivery if possible
<b><u>Insomnia (can't sleep)</u></b> Benadryl Camomile Tea @ bedtime Avoid caffeine after noon	<b><u>Yeast Infections</u></b> Monistat 7	<b><u>Headaches</u></b> Tylenol Rest in dark quiet room Drink plenty of fluids Try heat or ice to back of neck

**Morning Sickness – Nausea and Vomiting During Pregnancy**

No one is exactly sure what causes morning sickness but it would seem that the cause is a combination of issues related to the chemical changes your body is going through. Those changes include rapidly increasing estrogen and progesterone levels, and enhanced sense of smell and excess stomach acids. It has been suggested that the stress and fatigue that commonly accompany pregnancy also play a role. Below are some suggestions to help relieve or reduce your symptoms.

1. Avoid spicy or greasy foods
2. Eat a high protein snack before bed (nuts, yogurt, cheese, turkey, peanut butter, boiled egg)
3. Eat soda crackers, ginger snaps or dry toast or dry un-sugared cereal (like Cheerios) before getting out of bed in the morning
4. Drink red raspberry leaf tea, mint tea, sips of ginger ale or 7-up
5. Take ground ginger capsules, 250 mg. every six hours
6. Take vitamin B-6, 25 mg. three times daily
7. Take Unisom ½ tablet and vitamin B-6 at bedtime
8. Use acupressure bands, "Sea Bands" available a drugstores
9. Drink liquids between meals, not with meals
10. Eat small more frequent meals instead of three larger meals
11. Snack on salty or sour foods
12. Try "Nausea Ease" a natural supplement to relieve nausea
13. Cut prenatal vitamins in half and take half in AM with breakfast and the other half with evening meal
14. Get plenty of rest, at least 8 hours per night
15. Emetrol can be purchased without a prescription. It is an anti-nausea medication that is safe to use during pregnancy
16. If you are unable to keep *any* food or fluids down for more than 24 hours, you should call the office for a same-day

appointment. Signs of dehydration are dry lips and mouth, decreased urinary output, hot dry skin. Please see your health care provider or contact the on-call doctor or midwife if the office is closed.

### **Other Frequently asked Questions about Pregnancy**

**Is it ok to color my hair?** Often pregnant women have concerns about the safety of hair dyes and permanents during pregnancy. Since there is not adequate scientific data as to whether it is safe or not, it is recommended that you wait until after the first trimester. (until after your 12th week of pregnancy)

**Is it ok to get a perm?** See above answer

**Is it ok to swim?** Yes, in clean lakes or pools

**Can I use a tanning bed during pregnancy?** Yes; do remember that anytime you tan, either in direct sunlight or a tanning bed, you are increasing your risk of skin cancer!

**Are hot tubs or saunas ok during pregnancy?** No; they can raise your internal body temperature to a level that would be dangerous to the developing baby. Limited exposure at low heat of 98 – 99 degrees F. is ok in 2nd and 3rd trimesters.

**Can I paint or be in the house when it is being painted?** Yes; use only latex based paints and avoid oil or lead based paints. Make sure the area is well ventilated

**What about travel during pregnancy?** If your pregnancy is uncomplicated, you may travel up to week 34. Plan to stop every 2-3 hours to get out and walk. After 34 weeks, check with your doctor or midwife about your specific situation. If you plan to fly anytime during your pregnancy, check with the airline about restrictions.

**Is it safe to exercise?** Yes. In an uncomplicated pregnancy, we recommend exercise. Walking 20 – 30 minutes each day is an excellent form of exercise. Contact sports, snow skiing, water skiing, and horse back riding are strongly discouraged. Scuba diving is not safe at any time during pregnancy.

**What can I do to relieve my backache?** You may try a heating pad, an ice pack, and Tylenol. Massage may be helpful, or a chiropractor who is trained in treating pregnancy aches and pains. Try stretching exercises, pelvic rocking, or you may need to talk to your provider about an external pregnancy support garment. Use good body mechanics such as bending legs rather than back when lifting.

**I get leg cramps, what can I do to relieve these?** Leg cramps are often caused by the enlarging uterus putting pressure on the blood vessels and decreasing the circulation to the lower extremity muscles. Try using a heating pad, or soaking in a warm bath. Straighten the affected leg but do not point the toes, instead “point your heel” while you stretch. Elevate your legs several times a day for 10 – 15 minutes.

**My hands get tingling and numb especially at night; what causes this?** Fluid retention causes compression of the nerve in the wrist. Wearing wrist splints at night will help relieve this discomfort. They can be purchased without a prescription. The numbness usually disappears about 6-8 weeks after delivery.

**Is it normal to have aches and pains in the pelvis?** Yes. Early in pregnancy it is normal to feel cramping as the uterus grows and discomfort as the ligaments stretch. During the second trimester it is normal to feel pains in the pelvis as the uterus grows, your skin stretches, and the baby moves around. During the third trimester, it is common to have backache and sciatica. Toward the end of the pregnancy, ligaments in the hips and pelvis loosen causing shooting pains toward your upper abdomen or vagina. Areas of numbness may also occur on your abdomen, if you are concerned about preterm labor, please call for a same-day appointment.

**What should I do if I've been exposed to Chicken Pox?** There should be no problem if you have already had the Chicken Pox or the vaccine. If you are unsure if you have had Chicken Pox, a blood test can be done to see if you are immune. If you are *not* immune and are exposed to Chicken Pox, let your provider know right away.

**What do I do if I've been exposed to Fifth's Disease?** It is likely that you have had the disease as a child and are therefore immune. If you are not sure or do not know, a blood test can be done to determine your immunity status. It is not likely that you will contract the disease with casual contact. Good hand washing and hygiene are important to prevent infection.

**My feet are swollen, is this normal?** Mild swelling of the ankles, feet and legs is related to the normal increase in body fluids during pregnancy. To ease the discomfort, elevate your legs, or lie down at least twice a day for 10 – 15 minutes, wear comfortable shoes and avoid elastic top socks. Drink at least 2 quarts of water daily to help avoid excess water retention. Support hose may be helpful. Call for an appointment if you have facial swelling, visual changes, or headache.

**How do you know when it is not Braxton Hicks and time to go to the hospital?** Braxton Hicks contractions are also known as false labor. They usually begin sometime after the 20th week of pregnancy. Sometimes they are felt earlier and are more intense in women who have had a previous pregnancy. The contractions are usually painless, but sometimes uncomfortable. They are actually a contraction of the uterine muscle and last about 30 seconds, but may last as long as a couple of minutes. Around 36 weeks or so, the contractions become more frequent. Changing your position will help stop the contractions.

**So what are the symptoms of 'real labor'?** It is probably 'real labor' if: (1) the contractions become stronger, rather than

ease up with a change in position and over time, the pain begins in the lower back and spreads to the lower abdomen, (3) the contractions become progressively more frequent and painful, (4) the contractions are accompanied by a pinkish or blood-streaked discharge, (5) or if your water breaks.

### **Should I get a Flu Vaccine during Pregnancy?**

Vaccination against influenza has been shown to be safe in pregnancy. In fact, it is recommended for patients who are pregnant, or who will be pregnant during flu season to get a flu vaccine. If you are already pregnant you should schedule your flu vaccine for after your 12th week of pregnancy.

**I am 16 weeks pregnant. I am having pain in both sides of my lower abdomen. Is this normal?** As pregnancy progresses, your uterus gradually enlarges. Many women have concerns regarding pain during this time period. As you reach 16 weeks, your uterus is significantly enlarged and most women become noticeably pregnant. Although there are many reasons for abdominal pain during pregnancy, the most common condition is "round ligament" pain. The round ligaments are connective tissue ligaments that run from the upper aspect of the uterus down to the groin. As pregnancy progresses these ligaments enlarge and become stretched, and can cause pain. The pain sensation that women often feel involves both sides of the lower abdomen and sometimes the back. The pain is sharp in nature and can be worse on the right side. Certain movements may exacerbate the pain. Round ligament pain has not been associated with any adverse outcomes of pregnancy. Treatments include heat on the affected area and rest. Medications often do not alleviate symptoms. It is important to discuss any abdominal pain with your physician or midwife. There are several other causes of persistent pain. You may need a physical exam or other tests should your pain become severe or be associated with other symptoms. I am one month pregnant and I'm cramping a lot. Is that bad? Many women have cramping during early pregnancy. However, if you have persistent cramping, especially if it is associated with bleeding or spotting, it is important that you see your physician or midwife immediately.

### **Warning Symptoms of Premature Labor**

Occasional, mild, irregular contractions (so-called Braxton-Hicks contractions) are normal in the second half of pregnancy. However, it is not normal to have frequent contractions prior to 37 weeks (3 weeks before your due date).

The following are warning symptoms of premature labor:

~Regular uterine tightening or contractions occurring 4 or more times per hour. This may feel as though the baby is "rolling up into a ball." Your uterus may become tight and harden to the touch. You may also perceive contractions as a rhythmic low backache. Contractions may feel like severe menstrual cramps.

~An unusual rhythmic or persistent pelvic pressure.

~A large amount of mucus or watery discharge leaking from the vagina. This is especially concerning if the discharge has a red, pink, or brown color. It is normal to have a minimal amount of spotting after intercourse or after a pelvic exam. Any other vaginal bleeding should be immediately reported to a nurse or doctor at our office.

If you have any of these symptoms prior to 37 weeks, you should stop any strenuous activity, rest on your left side, take two Tylenol, soak in a warm bath, and push fluids. Try to drink at least 4 large glasses of water.

If the symptoms persist despite fluids and rest for one hour, you should call the office to speak with the phone nurse. After office hours, you should call Goshen Hospital and request that the Fairhaven doctor or midwife on-call be paged. They will return your call. You may need to come to the office or hospital for evaluation.