

Breast changes

Early in pregnancy breasts may “tingle” or feel full and tender. Your nipples may stick out and leak colostrum (early milk) after the fifth month.

- Wear a supportive bra that fits properly (you may need to wear it to bed too)

Shortness of breath

At end of pregnancy you may have difficulty taking deep breaths. Your baby is pushing up against your lungs.

- Sleep on your left side
- Prop your head up on two pillows when you go to bed
- If you have chest pain, cannot catch your breath and/or have very fast breathing, go to the Emergency Room

Dizzy spells

These may happen if you stand up fast or stand still for a long time.

- Get up slowly, especially after you have been lying down
- Change positions frequently
- Lie down and put your legs up if you do feel dizzy
- Follow Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide
- Lie on side when you are resting – Exercise regularly



Stuffy nose

This is caused by swelling in nose. Sometimes your nose may bleed.

- Use a humidifier
- Breathe in steam in a hot shower
- Try saline drops in your nose

Constipation

This happens when progesterone causes digestive muscles to relax. Your growing uterus and iron supplements also slow digestion.

- Eat variety of fibre-rich foods (whole grain breads and cereals, bran, oats, legumes, fresh or dried fruits such as apples, pears or prunes, and vegetables with skin)
- Drink up to 2.3 L (9.5 cups) of water or other fluids every day
- Walk every day. Discuss activity level with your Health Care Provider

Hemorrhoids

These are swollen veins around rectum (also called “piles”) that cause pressure and pain. They get worse if you are constipated.

- Follow constipation suggestions
- Soak in warm water

Vaginal discharge

Thick, whitish discharge is normal.

Take a shower or bath every day using plain soap and water.

- Allow vagina to “breathe” by wearing cotton, or no underwear

Itching

Itchiness may result from stretching skin and estrogen levels.

- Use body cream
- Have bath with oatmeal
- Wear loose clothing to avoid heat rash

Stretch marks

Dark lines may appear on your breasts, abdomen, buttocks or thighs. This happens when elastic fibers in your skin are stretched to their limit and break.

- Cannot be prevented, but may shrink and fade to fine lines after pregnancy

NOTE: if a discomfort is getting worse, ask your Health Care Provider what to do

For more information call:

Your Health Care Provider

**Region of Waterloo
Public Health and
Emergency Services**

519-575-4400

TTY 519-575-4608

www.regionofwaterloo.ca/pregnancy



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES



Promoting a comfortable pregnancy



Why does this happen and what can I do?

Morning sickness (nausea)

This can happen any time of day or night. Usually goes away by fourth month, but can continue throughout pregnancy.

- Eat crackers before getting out of bed
- Eat dry food for breakfast
- Eat 6–8 small meals/day
- Eat protein (yogurt, eggs, cheese, nuts, legumes, milk, meat, chicken, fish)
- Prevent a drop in blood sugar (makes nausea worse) by eating healthy carbohydrates often (grains/starches, milk/yogurt, fruit)
- Drink fluids between meals
- Smell citrus, mint or vanilla
- Prenatal vitamin, try half in morning and half in afternoon, or before bed
- Ask your Health Care Provider (HCP) if ginger, alternative therapies or medications can help

Teeth and gums

Hormones can cause swollen and bleeding gums. Stomach acid from vomiting can damage your tooth enamel.

- Rinse your mouth after vomiting
- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss your teeth daily
- See a dentist / hygienist for care



Heartburn

Your growing baby pushes on your stomach. The looser muscle at the top of your stomach lets food come back up.

- Eat slowly
- Eat small meals several times a day
- Drink fluids between meals
- Drink milk
- Avoid coffee, cigarettes, fatty, fried or spicy food
- Avoid lying down or bending over after eating

Going pee a lot

Your growing baby pushes on your bladder. This eases as baby moves out of pelvis around the fourth month. Returns when baby drops in the ninth month.

- Drink at least six glasses of water during the day
- Limit drinking in the hours before bed
- If your pee is cloudy, you have pain and/or are peeing more often than you usually do, see your HCP

Tiredness and Sleeplessness

These are caused by hormone changes early in pregnancy.

- Try to nap in middle of day
- Adjust the hours of your day
- Eat following Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide
- Try drinking warm milk or having snack with protein before bed
- Warm feet may help you sleep

Leg cramps

These can be caused by pressure of uterus on blood vessels that go into your legs.

- Do leg exercises to increase the circulation in your legs
- Flex toes up toward your head if leg cramps do occur

Varicose veins

Stretched blood vessels cause blood to pool. These are usually seen in your legs.

- Wear loose clothing
- Wear full length support hose
- Point and flex your feet
- Soak feet in cool water
- Lay down to rest with feet elevated
- Get a foot and leg rub
- Make sure you drink enough

Groin pain

Weight of uterus stretches ligaments which hold it in place.

- Stand straight
- Get up slowly, supporting your growing belly (baby)

Backache

Ligaments supporting spine soften during pregnancy. As abdomen gets bigger it puts stress on your lower back. Your pelvic joints soften.

- Be active regularly to strengthen and improve blood circulation
- Join a prenatal fitness class
- Wear shoes with low heels
- Be careful when lifting
- Correct your posture when walking, standing and sitting
- Tilt your pelvis forward to relieve backache
- Try a heat or ice pack
- Take a shower
- Massage with tennis ball
- Prop body with pillows while sleeping
- Ask your HCP about medications for back pain

