

# Severe Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

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# Introduction

Severe nausea and vomiting in pregnancy is thought to be caused by hormonal changes. It tends to be at its worst between 8 – 12 weeks and it usually eases by 16 weeks.

This can be safely treated, even in the first trimester of your pregnancy.

It can be an isolating/helpless time for you and your family/friends. You may feel weak and lose weight due to not being able to eat/drink and severe vomiting. However, there are many things that you can do to help yourself feel better.

This booklet will provide you with information on managing nausea and vomiting in pregnancy to help you enjoy a healthy pregnancy and provide your baby with the best start in life.

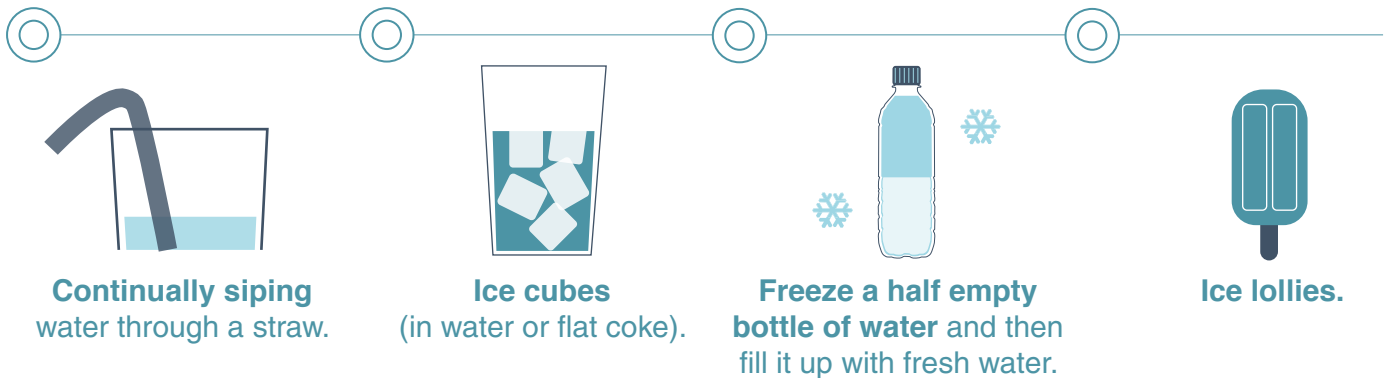
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# Step One:

## Drinking Enough Fluid

It is important that you do not become dehydrated.  
Try drinking water in different ways:

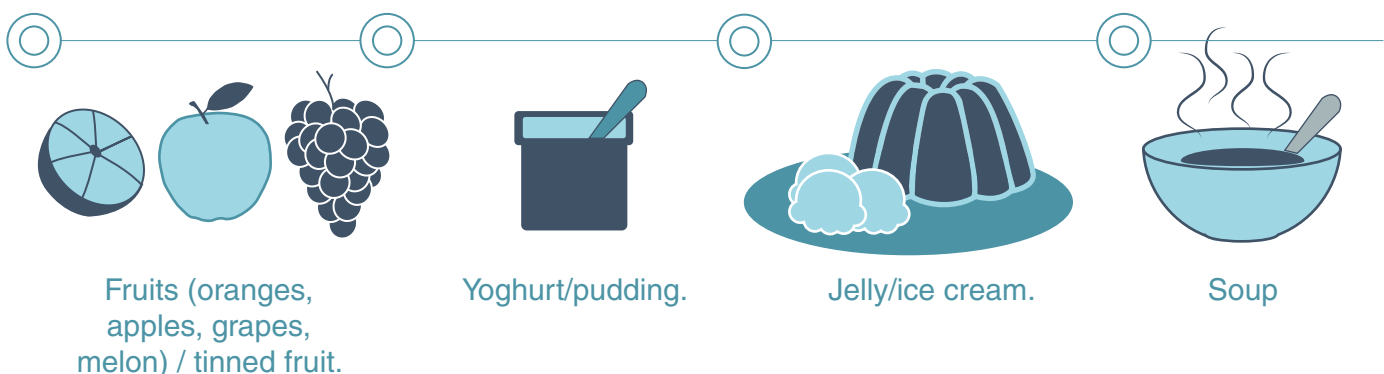


Try holding water/drinks in your mouth.

If you are struggling to drink water and/or keep it down, **try flavoured fluids** instead of water.



Some foods have higher water content and can help you stay hydrated:



If you can't hold down any fluids, go to your doctor or  
come into the hospital.



## Step Two:

### Eating Enough Food

Once you are properly hydrated, the next step is to eat enough to keep your energy up and prevent weight loss.

Start by eating foods you like and feel like eating. Colour, flavour, temperature and texture may impact on what you can tolerate. Each box below has a list of similar foods. If you can manage one food from the list, you may be able to manage other. The list can help you with new ideas of what to try.

Do not worry if your diet is not the best while you are sick.

#### Salty Foods

- Mashed potatoes with salt (and cheese)
- Noodles with salt (and cheese)
- Thin slices of fresh ham/cheese
- Toasted cheese sandwich
- Tomato juice with added salt/lemon
- Vegetable / chicken noodle soup
- Laughing cow cheese
- Green apple / lemon sprinkled with salt

#### Fruity Foods

- Fresh fruit/tinned fruit
- Sultana bran or fruit 'n' fibre
- Jam on toast
- Ham & pineapple toastie
- Dried fruit
- Club orange
- Fruit juice

#### Tart/Sour/Bitter Foods

- Pickles
- Oven chips with vinegar
- Salt and vinegar crisps
- Extra-sour lemonade
- Lemon jelly with extra lemon juice
- Grapefruit juice
- Tonic water
- Mandarin oranges
- Fresh cranberries
- Cranberry juice with squeeze of lemon
- Sour apples
- Salsa

#### Bland/Mild Foods

- Mashed potatoes
- Rice / noodles
- Custard
- Rice pudding
- Porridge
- White toast
- Cream crackers / rich tea biscuits
- Pancakes / waffles
- Plain or vanilla yogurt
- Scones / croissants
- Plain bagel

### Earthy/Meaty Foods

- Cream of potato soup / mushroom soup
- Brown rice / baked potato
- Bran flakes / porridge / rice cakes
- Avocados / spinach / mushrooms
- Cola drinks / homemade hot chocolate
- Raisin bread / cheese bread
- Hummus / pesto / nuts
- Gouda / emmental / cream cheese

### Sweet Foods

- Cakes
- Tinned fruit / dried fruit
- Ice cream / sorbet
- Sweetened breakfast cereal
- Jam
- Jelly
- Syrup
- Porridge with brown sugar

### Crunchy / Hard Foods

- Celery / carrot sticks
- Iceberg lettuce / cucumber
- Crispy bacon / fried egg roll
- Apples / watermelon / grapes
- Oven chips
- Pretzels / taco shells / rice cakes
- Pickles
- Meringues /hobnobs / biscotti
- Ice chips

### Soft Foods

- French toast or egg bread
- Mashed potatoes
- Rice pudding / custard
- Tinned peaches / pears
- Baked potatoes with butter
- Pancakes
- Yoghurt / ice cream
- Sponge cake
- Danish pastry

### Dry Foods

- Crackers
- Bread/toast
- Cookies/biscuits
- Cereals without milk
- Dried fruit
- Oatcakes / rice cakes

### Wet Foods

- Sparkling water / tonic water
- Flavoured or bottled water
- Milk
- Fresh juicy fruits (orange, mango, melon) or juices
- Pureed fruit

### Spicy Foods

- Ginger beer / gingernut biscuits
- Peppers / salsa
- Hot sauce / tabasco sauce / curry
- Seafood sauce / horseradish
- Buttered toast sprinkled with cinnamon

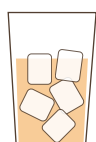
### Fragrant/Aromatic Foods

- Mustard
- Ginger / garlic / curry
- Peppermint tea
- Licorice
- Dill / rosemary / cinnamon

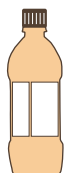
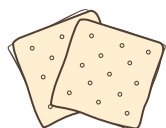
## Sample Meal Plan

Eat little and often as this is one of the best ways to reduce / prevent the nausea from worsening. Try nibbling on 100-200 calories every hour. Sip 100-200mls fluid every hour. It can help to have food and drinks separately.

### Morning



9am



10am



11am



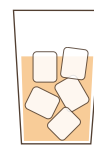
### Afternoon



12pm



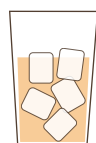
1pm



2pm



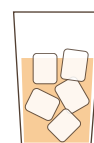
### Evening



3pm



4pm



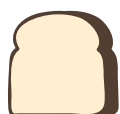
5pm



### Night



6pm



7pm

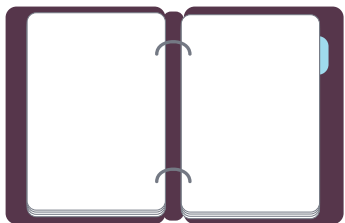


8pm

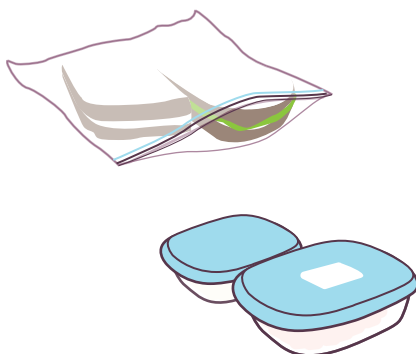


## Step Three: Getting Organised

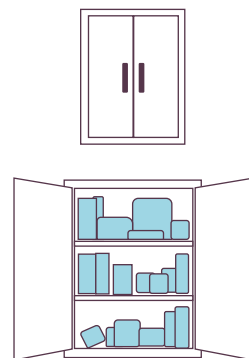
Nausea-free times can last for 10-15 minutes up to many hours. It is important to increase your intake of food/fluids during this time:



Keep a diary to become aware of nausea-free times.



Have food prepared (sandwiches / ready meals / frozen batch cooked meals) to make the most the nausea-free opportunity.



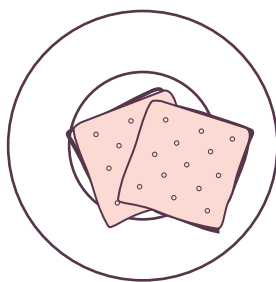
Keep your cupboard stocked with easy meals e.g. cheese and crackers, scrambled eggs/beans on toast, tinned soup, packet noodles.

Eat when you feel hungry before it turns into nausea. Nibble your favourite food (little and often) and stop eating as soon as your stomach feels satisfied.

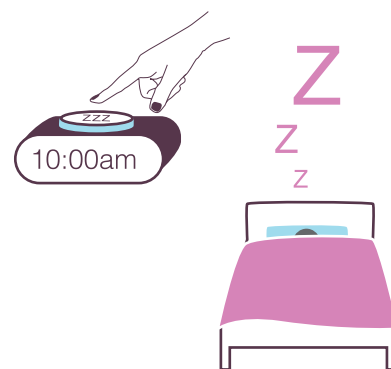
Symptoms are usually worse in the morning so be organised and prepared the night before:



Prepare clothes and shower before bed. Do the same with children.



Leave some dry crackers or plain biscuits beside your bed to eat when you wake up. Then wait about 15 -20 minutes before getting up.

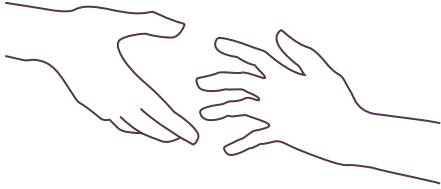


Get some extra rest as becoming overly tired can worsen nausea.

Ask for help from others to avoid rushing in the morning. Take your folic acid later in the day/before bed if your symptoms are worse in the morning.



This can be a very lonely / helpless time for you and your family.



Ask for and accept help offered. This will help you cope better and rest more (shopping, cooking and cleaning).



Contact friends or support groups. It may be helpful to keep connected to others using other forms (phonecall, Facebook or Skype).



Remove strong smells from your home that make you feel sick. If cooking makes you sick, choose to make cold foods or get out of the kitchen when others are cooking.

If you are feeling sad that you are not having the ideal pregnancy that you had hoped for, talk to someone you trust about how you feel.

For further information please see the Website links below:



Hyperemesis  
Ireland



<https://www.hyperemesis.ie>



<https://twitter.com/HyperemesisEire>



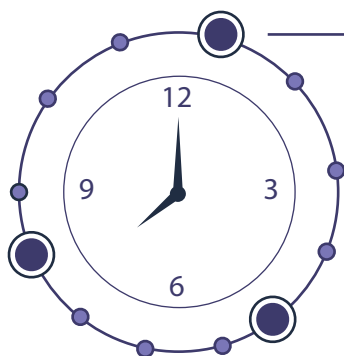
<https://www.facebook.com/hyperemesisireland/>

## Step Four:

# Healthy Eating In Pregnancy

Once the sickness fades, aim to eat a healthy, balanced diet.

- 1 Eat regular meals and snacks to help prevent hunger, which is often followed by nausea:



Plan 3 meals spaced 4-5 hours apart

Include up to 3 small snacks between meals

- 2 Eat some wholegrains at main meals for a steady release of energy.

- Choose wholegrain breads, breakfast cereals, brown/basmati rice, wholewheat /egg noodles and new potatoes (with skins).



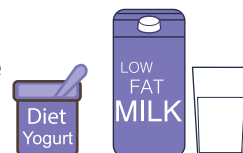
- 3 Eat protein at main meals for your baby's growth & development.

- Choose lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, beans and nuts.
- Avoid breaded/battered, fatty meats or processed meat.
- Choose healthy cooking methods.



- 4 Eat 3-5 servings of milk and dairy to build strong bones & teeth

- Choose Vitamin D fortified low fat milk, reduced fat cheese and plain, natural, no-added sugar or "diet" yoghurt.



- 5 Take a supplement of 5-10 micrograms (400 IU) Vitamin D daily to help absorb calcium.

- Choose foods rich in vitamin D for example oily fish, fortified milk or spreads.



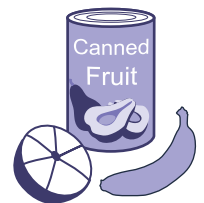
## 6 Eat foods rich in iron every day to make extra blood cells for your baby

- Red meat and oily fish are great sources of easily absorbed iron
- Eggs, beans, dark green leafy vegetables, dried fruit and foods fortified with iron.



## 7 Eat plenty of vegetables & 2-3 pieces of fruit for fibre & vitamins.

- Fibre slows down how quickly foods are digested and helps to keep you fuller for longer and vitamin C helps absorb iron.
- Choose fresh, frozen fruit and canned options (in fruit juice).
- Limit juices (even 100% pure juice), smoothies and dried fruit.



## 8 Include some healthy fats in your diet for a healthy heart.

- Nuts, seeds, avocado and plant oils (olive and rapeseed) contain fatty acids that help with your baby's growth and development. Omega-3 oils are particularly important for baby's brain development, nervous systems and eyes.
- Try to eat one portion of oily fish (salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, kippers and herring) each week. Soya, walnuts and rapeseed oil are good vegetarian alternatives.



Note: If you have been prescribed medication for the management of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy, please follow the advice of your doctor or pharmacist. Should your symptoms persist or worsen, please seek medical attention.

