

MANAGING MORNING SICKNESS



Key Facts

the science +
medical info you
need to know

Tips + Suggestions

reccomendations from medical
professionals + the collective
wisdom of mothers



WHAT IS MORNING SICKNESS + WHY DO WE GET IT?

1. The term 'Morning Sickness' is quite misleading as the symptoms can occur at any time of the day.

2. Most women experience some degree of nausea and vomiting during the first twelve weeks of their pregnancy. Some women never experience it or have very light feelings of illness and a small number (less than 2%) experience more severe symptoms that require more support and assistance.

3. Pregnancy is a very personal experience and the way your body responds is unlikely be the same as your friends, your family or even your own previous pregnancies.

4. The reason we experience morning sickness is not completely clear, but is generally considered to result from physical, hormonal and chemical changes in our bodies that are triggered by pregnancy.

5. Other factors include changes to our metabolism (especially the way we process carbohydrates) which can lead to low blood sugar and fluctuations in blood pressure (especially lower blood pressure, which can occur more commonly in early pregnancy).

6. Morning sickness can be triggered by an empty stomach, stress or anxiety and can be exacerbated by smells.



WHEN SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR OR YOUR BABY'S HEALTH?

Normal morning sickness is not harmful to your baby as long as you can keep food down, maintain your hydration and (ideally) eat a balanced diet.

Severe morning sickness, called hyperemesis gravidarum, occurs in less than 2% of women. The tips in this article are intended for women suffering from morning sickness not HG, which will typically require assistance from medical professionals.

If you are experiencing severe and ongoing nausea and vomiting you should speak to your midwife or doctor, especially if you are:

- Losing weight or unable to keep food or fluid down for 24 hours;
- Becoming dehydrated with dark coloured urine or do not pee for more than 8 hours;
- Feeling severely dizzy, weak or faint when standing up;
- Suffering from tummy pain or vomiting blood;
- Registering a high temperature of 38°C or higher; or
- Feeling pain when you pee or have any blood in your urine (which may indicate an infection).

If you are worried you might be suffering from hyperemesis gravidarum you can find more information [HERE](#).



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MANAGE YOUR MORNING SICKNESS?

We have compiled our recommendations from medical professionals as well as the collective wisdom of mothers from around the world.

You will also find links to useful resources.

Remember - everyone is different, and something that helps your friend may make you feel worse. Listen to what your body is telling you, be kind to yourself and remember to ask for help if you need it.

- ✔ Modify your routine
- ✔ Hydration
- ✔ Helpful Foods
- ✔ Acupuncture, Acupressure + Reflexology



MODIFY YOUR ROUTINE

MORNING - FIRST THING

- Eat something when you first wake up, before you get out of bed, recommendations include toast, dry crackers, muesli bars - something you can keep beside the bed.
- Delay brushing teeth if the taste and smell add to early morning nausea.

DURING THE DAY

- Wear lightweight comfortable clothing - embrace the elastic waist.
- Eat smaller meals more often - 5 to 6 small meals is recommended.
- Take regular gentle exercise - this is helpful while your body adapts + maintaining flexibility and strength will benefit you later in your pregnancy.
- Get plenty of rest - try and get to bed earlier + take afternoon rests if your daily routine allows for this.
- You might like to try introducing stress reducing techniques like meditation.
- Be prepared - sometimes there isn't anything that you can do, so make life easier for yourself by carrying tissues, wet wipes, a little bottle of mouth wash + a small rubbish bag.

BEFORE BED

- A light snack before bedtime can help you sleep and reduce the impact of an empty stomach in the morning - try something high in protein and complex carbohydrates (eg. some cheese and a handful of dried apricots).



HYDRATION

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Staying well hydrated is critical for your baby and yourself.

Many women reported water as helpful in managing their nausea and reducing vomiting.

Others noted that drinking water eased the impact of unavoidable vomiting by ensuring there was something more gentle in their stomach.

- Take small sips often, iced water can be easier to keep down.
- If sipping water is a challenge, try sucking on crushed ice.
- Sparking water can be helpful, try adding a fresh lime or lemon slice.

Other liquids can also help with hydration such as:

- Herbal tea (peppermint, ginger + fennel were recommended;
- Watered down juice;
- Soup;
- Flat lemonade;
- Smoothies; or
- Shakes.



HELPFUL FOODS

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- Eat plain food in small amounts frequently during the day.
- Try eating a bland, protein-rich diet such as rice, plain toast, plain grilled chicken, rice crackers, plain pasta + cheese (many women also reported that bland foods are less horrid when you are unable to keep them down).
- Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) - Bananas, potatoes, watermelon and chickpeas are all rich in this nutrient. Talk to your maternity carer about taking vitamin B6 supplements.
- Anything sour eg, freshly cut lemon, limes or sour lollies.
- Salty foods, eg. marmite, potato chips.
- Mandarins / satsumas / grapes.
- Arrowroot as a supplement or in biscuits.
- Almonds.
- Probiotics.
- Peppermint sweets or gum are helpful to keep in the handbag.

GINGER

Ginger is commonly recommended by other mums to help manage pregnancy nausea. Studies have shown that eating about one gram of fresh ginger per day for at least 4 days can reduce nausea and vomiting in early pregnancy.

Other simple ways to take ginger include:

- Ginger drinks such as tea or ginger ale;
- Food containing ginger such as gingernut biscuits;
- Ginger capsules (from a pharmacy) - recommended by those who could not stomach the taste of fresh ginger or ginger food/drink; and
- Ginger lollies.



ACUPUNCTURE, ACUPRESSURE + REFLEXOLOGY

ACUPUNCTURE + ACUPRESSURE

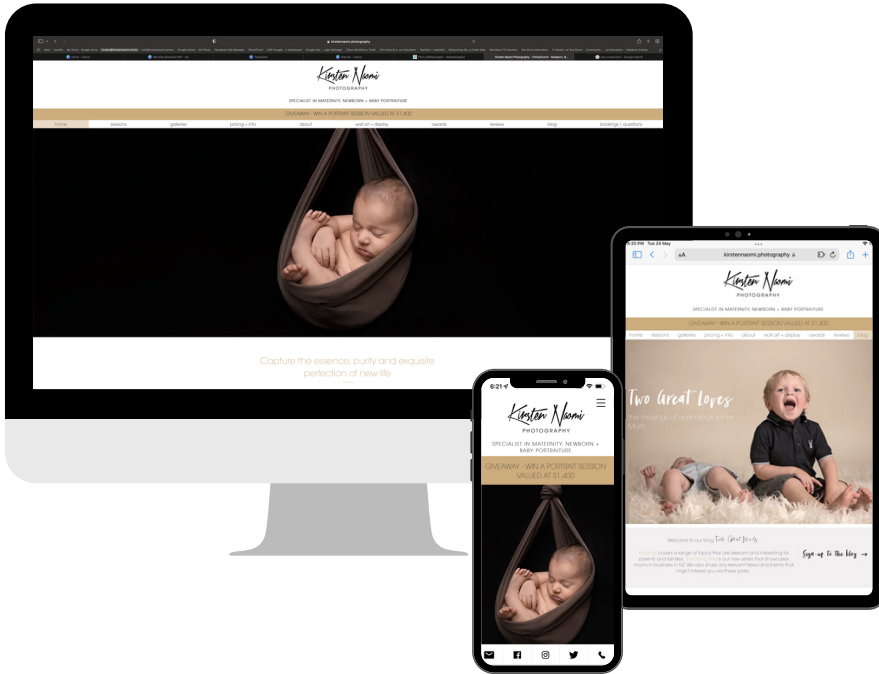
Lots of women recommend acupuncture as “a complete life changer”. If the idea of acupuncture makes you squeamish, acupressure bracelets are a simple addition to your daily routine that many find helpful.

- Acupuncture is the practice of stimulating specific points under your skin using very thin needles.
- Acupuncture has been the subject of a number of international studies and reviews that are reporting favourable results.
- Find a registered Christchurch based Acupuncture therapist.
- Studies have indicated that wearing acupressure bands significantly reduces the frequency and severity of nausea and vomiting of pregnancy.
- You can buy Sea-Bands online.

REFLEXOLOGY

Reflexology has been recommended as helpful by numerous women and, at the very least, is a relaxing treat when you are feeling delicate.

- Maternity reflexology targets pressure points in the feet and aims to balance the effects of hormonal changes and to work with what is going on in the pregnant body to support the mother.
- Reflexology is considered to be helpful at various stages of pregnancy from helping cope with morning sickness, recovering from IVF and preparing for birth.
- Find a registered Christchurch based Reflexologist.



Helpful?

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PHOTOGRAPHY