

## **What to Expect in the First Three Months of Pregnancy**

The first signs of pregnancy will typically appear in about two weeks but during the first three months, you will begin to notice all types of changes to the body and emotions. Known as the first trimester, this is one of the stages of pregnancy when the majority of changes occur. The one thing we want to remind you is that while feeling nauseated, tired, and uncomfortable are common, every pregnant woman has different symptoms and different intensities of symptoms.

It is important to understand the different changes occurring so you have a better idea as what to expect. In this article, we will go through the most common complaints of pregnancy, as well as tips for managing them.

### ***Morning Sickness***

During your first two weeks pregnant, the hormones in your body are going through major changes. You will find that foods, perfumes, and even environmental smells that you normally like now become repulsive. In fact, many pregnant women agree they get very nauseated and even vomit because of the heightened sense of smell.

Of course, there are other causes of nausea, one being the pressure being placed on your digestive system due to the stretching of the uterine muscles and growing size of the fetus. What happens is that there is a higher production of acid that can be pushed upwards, resulting in nausea and vomiting.

There are some positive things you can do to help reduce the effects of morning sickness. Now, there are some women who never have nausea or have only a slight problem – how fortunate. For the pregnant women who have intense problem, being nauseated 24 hours a day is a very serious problem.

Keep in mind that while you deal with morning sickness during pregnancy, most often the feeling of nausea will disappear at about the 12-week mark. Morning sickness is the most common pregnancy symptom so if you are faced with this problem remember that you are perfectly normal.

You can do several things to lessen the intensity of pregnancy morning sickness. For starters, instead of eating three large meals a day, switch to six smaller meals. This way, the stomach is never empty so increased acid is not as much a problem. In fact, experts agree that one of the triggers for morning sickness is not having any food in the stomach. Since you go all night without eating, we recommend you keep bread or crackers on your nightstand and then before even getting out of bed, munch on a few.

This symptom of pregnancy can also be controlled by eating the right foods. While pregnant, you need to increase the amount of starchy foods, breads, and proteins consumed. You are going to gain weight during pregnancy and while you want to be careful, when dealing with certain pregnancy symptoms, weight gain should be the last thought. Typically, eating a little food will make a huge improvement in the way you feel so during the first weeks pregnant, keep your

focus on feeling good and not so much on weight gain, which you can worry about after the morning sickness passes.

### ***Food Cravings***

Everyone has heard the story of a pregnant woman craving pickles and ice cream but do not laugh. While pregnant, you will have some of the strangest food cravings such as this. For instance, there will be some women who have a very powerful craving at 2:00 in the morning for strawberry shortcake or she may want liver and onions, something she would normally never eat. Although strange, do not be afraid to indulge in these cravings, as this is a very normal part of pregnancy.

### ***Swelling and Tender Breasts***

Another symptom of pregnancy noticed early on is changes in your breasts. They will become very tender and sore and even swell. This happens because progesterone and estrogen levels increase, which means more milk, is being produced by hormonal changes and thus, swelling and soreness.

You may also notice that the area around the nipple called the areola becomes darker and larger. In some pregnant women, the breasts will also develop tiny white bumps and experience blue colored veins that can be enlarged in order to handle the additional blood supply needed when breastfeeding.

While some pregnant women will only experience swelling and soreness in the first few months, others have this symptom throughout the entire pregnancy. To ease some of the discomfort, we recommend you invest in a good support bra, one that will help with the added weight of the breasts.

### ***Short Breath and Fatigue***

Two other pregnancy symptoms include shortness of breath and fatigue. Trying to live a normal job, working, or going to school while pregnant can be physically difficult, which then affects the emotions. Even though getting more rest than normal might be challenging, it is important you work your schedule so you can rest. Typically, the overwhelming sense of fatigue is only during your first weeks pregnant but this symptom can last longer.

Rest is very important when pregnant so even though hard on some days, do all you can to get six to eight hours of good sleep. In addition, taking several short naps during the day can also alleviate some of the pregnancy fatigue.

In addition to naps, even eating a well-balanced diet can fight off pregnancy fatigue. If your body is getting the nourishment needed with minerals and vitamins, not only will you have more energy but you are also doing something good for the growing baby. During your pregnancy, your doctor will have you take prenatal vitamins, which really help but if fatigue becomes too much of a problem, the doctor may put you on other supplements and vitamins to help.

Other pregnancy information pertaining to fatigue has to do with exercise. Light to moderate activity actually boosts a person's energy level so consider walking, yoga, or swimming. Of course, before you get involved with any exercise or physical activity, talk to your doctor to make sure it would be safe for your pregnancy.

### ***Irritability, Mood Swings, and Emotions***

Every pregnant woman deals with these symptoms to some degree. Remember, the hormones in your body are going through rampant changes so breaking out in tears for no apparent reason is common and normal. Sometimes, just having a good crying spell will make the pregnancy easier to handle.

### ***Being Lightheaded***

Next, when pregnant, your heart is doing a lot more work than usual. The heart needs to push blood throughout the body in a more effective way to ensure the fetus is getting what is needed so having bouts of being lightheaded is expected. However, if you are not eating the right foods and six small meals throughout the day, you might also have a problem with blood sugar levels dropping. This too can cause dizziness and is usually resolved after eating a meal.

### ***Frequent Urination***

The final pregnancy symptom we want to address is very common and also annoying. As the baby grows, the bladder is pushed on, which means when you go to the bathroom, it becomes harder and harder to completely empty it. This means as you go about your day, you will have a frequent urge to urinate even though only a small amount will come out. Unfortunately, this is a pregnancy symptom that cannot be avoided so understand this is just a part of being with child.

One tip that some pregnant women find helpful is to lean forward as far as possible when going to the bathroom.

Each of these pregnancy symptoms is common although each woman will have a slightly different experience and level of intensity. Additionally, while one pregnancy may involve having all the listed symptoms, others only have a few.

Being pregnant is hard on the body and the mind, which is why now more than ever, you need to take good care of you. Make sure you never miss an appointment with your doctor, eat a well-balanced diet, drink plenty of fluids, get daily exercise, and if necessary and with your doctor's approval, add supplements and vitamins to your daily regimen.