

## Morning sickness – The facts at a glance

Nausea during pregnancy is also referred to as morning sickness but this term is misleading because the discomfort and nausea often last throughout the day. The severity of the symptoms and how long they last will vary depending on the individual. Symptoms range from a queasy feeling in the stomach to severe nausea and frequent vomiting.

# 85%

Up to 85% of women occasionally **feel sick** or **vomit** during pregnancy.<sup>1</sup>



The symptoms may begin **4 to 6 weeks** after the last period.<sup>2-5</sup>

# 95%

For up to 95% of affected women, the symptoms **last far longer than the morning**.



Normally, nausea and vomiting last for **6 to 8 weeks** during the pregnancy.

# 10%

For **10%** of women however, the symptoms persist throughout **the whole pregnancy**.<sup>4,5</sup>

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## Contact us at

ITF Pharma GmbH

Prinzregentenplatz 14

81675 Munich

Phone: +49 89 1894 265 0

Telefax: +49 89 1894 265 19

E-Mail: [medinfo@itfpharma.de](mailto:medinfo@itfpharma.de)



# BEATING MORNING SICKNESS!

<sup>1</sup> Madjunkova, S., Maltepe, C., Koren, G.: The Delayed-Release Combination of Doxylamine and Pyridoxine (Diclegis®/Diclectin®) for the Treatment of Nausea and Vomiting of Pregnancy, *Pediatr. Drugs* 2014, 16: 199–211; <sup>2</sup> Klebanoff, MA. et al., *Obstet Gynecol.* 1985, 66: 612–616; <sup>3</sup> Flaxman, SM., Sherman, PW., *Q Rev Biol.* 2000, 75: 113–148; <sup>4</sup> Vellacott, ID. et al., *Int J Gynaecol Obstet.* 1988, 27(1): 57–62; <sup>5</sup> Lacroix, R. et al., *Am J Obstet Gynecol.* 2000, 182: 931–937; <sup>6</sup> ACOG Practice Bulletin, *Obstet Gynecol.* 2018, 131: 15–30; <sup>7</sup> Miller, F., *Am J Obstet Gynecol.* 2002, 186: 182–183; <sup>8</sup> Mazzotta, P. et al., *J Psychosom Obstet Gynaecol.* 2001; 22: 7–12; <sup>9</sup> O'Brien, E. et al., *Nausea and vomiting during pregnancy: effects on the quality of women's lives.* *Birth* 1992, 19(3): 138–43.

Are you pregnant and suffering from morning sickness?  
Talk to your gynaecologist about treatment options.

For many women, a pregnancy is a happy event. However, it is often accompanied by nausea and sickness. These symptoms may be so severe that they prevent you going about your everyday life and you find it really difficult to do your job or other tasks. Instead of looking forward to your baby, you may just feel miserable.

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## What are the effects of morning sickness?

The good news first: slight morning sickness does not harm your baby. However, severe vomiting can lead to deficiency symptoms. In this case, you should talk to your gynaecologist immediately.<sup>6</sup>

Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy can have a major impact on the everyday life of affected women. It is estimated that because of morning sickness, 30 to 40% of pregnant women are unable to take part in family and social activities, or only to a limited extent.<sup>7-9</sup> Just getting out of bed in the morning can be a challenge, and everyday tasks can feel like torture. Some pregnant women find it virtually impossible to concentrate on their work. The nausea makes it difficult to think clearly and women suffering from this condition often need to be written off sick.

- For many women, the nausea disappears if the stomach is not quite empty. So it is best to eat smaller meals several times a day.
- You may also be able to relieve morning sickness if you have a light snack before going to bed.
- A small snack and a glass of water before you get up in the morning can also be beneficial.
- Food, drinks and sweets containing ginger have proved to be particularly helpful.
- Have enough to drink because frequent vomiting causes the body to lose a lot of fluid. So make sure you drink enough.
- Avoid trigger factors such as unpleasant smells (e.g. opening the dishwasher in the morning) or heat.

## What is Hyperemesis gravidarum?

Hyperemesis gravidarum is a severe form of morning sickness. It occurs when the nausea is accompanied by near constant severe vomiting.

The constant vomiting means women suffering from this condition are not receiving enough fluids and nutrients and this can cause serious health problems for both mother and child. This severe form of morning sickness may require affected women to take certain medicines under medical supervision. It may even require hospital treatment.

**Don't let it come to this. Speak to your gynaecologist early enough about your symptoms and possible treatment options.**

## What can I do to prevent morning sickness?

In most cases, small changes to your diet and lifestyle will be enough to alleviate morning sickness.

