

# NAUSEA and/or VOMITING DURING PREGNANCY

## FLUID INTAKE

It is essential to avoid dehydration. While it may not appear that drinking relieves nausea, becoming even slightly dehydrated will make any nausea more intense. Dry lips, feeling thirsty and a reduced urinary output are signs that fluid intake is inadequate. If there are traces of ketones in a urine stick test, or if urine output decreases to only once a day, a woman should inform her doctor or midwife. Once dehydration affects the electrolyte balance past a certain point, the best option may be intravenous re-hydration in a hospital.

If a woman finds it difficult to drink fluids in quantity, she should try and consume small amounts frequently. Soups are an excellent way to take in liquids. **Potato soup**, especially, can be useful as it is very bland. Other suitable soups include **vegetable broths** and basic **Miso soup** (see recipe below). **Ume Sho Bancha tea** (see recipe below) is excellent for nausea as it brings the digestion into an alkaline balance. Herbal teas, especially **ginger (although care should be taken not to exceed more than three cups per day)** or **peppermint tea** are often helpful. If belching makes the woman feel better, an occasional **carbonated ginger drink** may help settle the nausea.

## SNACKS

Having small regular snacks helps to keep blood sugar levels stable. This means eating a small snack at least every one to two hours, before an empty, hungry feeling sets in. The snack can be very small, a few **raisins or nuts** (almonds are often useful), a **sandwich** or a piece of fruit. As overeating can intensify the nausea, each woman needs to find her own individual balance. It is often helpful to give up having a regular breakfast, lunch and dinner and instead spread food intake over the entire day. Sugary foods need to be avoided as these will quickly elevate, and then drop blood sugar levels. Instead of sugary foods women should concentrate on consuming the slower releasing complex carbohydrates such as **fruit, rice & corn cakes or crackers, rice, healthy pastas and breads**.

The organization of all this food planning may seem horrendous but the benefits of eating regularly will soon make this a priority. For those who do get caught without food, a few **healthy potato chips/crisps or a small portion of a healthy nut bar** are usually readily available and can be more helpful in decreasing the impending nausea than waiting until they arrive home to make a healthier snack. It may also be helpful to have snacks that are high in protein such as **nuts & hummus** (without tahini aka sesame seed paste) before going to bed and a carbohydrate-based snack (see above complex carbohydrates) on waking.

Certain foods will definitely increase the nausea and it is important that women take into account what is best for them. Foods that worked for their friends or mother-in-law may have a different effect for them. However, the following is a list of foods many women find helpful.

## LIQUIDS

**Chamomile tea, Ginger Ale, Ginger Tea (no more than three cups per day), Mineral water with lemon juice, Peppermint tea, Potato soup, Umeboshi plum tea (see recipe below).**

## FOODS

**Almonds, baby rice made into porridge, crackers, fruit, egg sandwiches, Miso, noodles, pasta, peaches, pears, commercial organic baby foods.**

It might also be helpful to ask women to consider the type of food that is suitable for an eight-month-old baby (this concept works well with those women who have children), as these foods are easy to digest and gentle on the digestive system, for example cooked and raw fruits, grains, soups & veggies.

## REST

Resting is definitely beneficial for women experiencing morning sickness. Women often find it difficult to reconcile the tremendous changes that their body is undergoing in the early weeks of pregnancy when they have nothing to show for it, and may easily overwork. **Whenever possible they will benefit from arranging some rest for the time of day when they are most prone to feeling nauseous, perhaps starting work an hour later or arranging some extra child care for a few weeks.**

Many women are concerned about their need to go to bed very early, perhaps at 7 p.m. instead of their normal time of 11 p.m. **If you are tired, take a nap or go to bed early.**

## SMELLS

Sensitivity to odours can be an overwhelming feature of early pregnancy. Where possible women can use this heightened sense of smell to overcome problem areas at home or work by using aromatic oil burners. Popular suggestions include burning peppermint oil in the bedroom at night so that they experience its effect on waking, and using vanilla essence in the kitchen. Natural smells such as lemon can also be useful, even if this means carrying a lemon on public transport or to the supermarket. Put a little lemon or lime peel in a handkerchief and smell when exposed to smells that cause nausea.

## Ume-Sho Bancha Tea

This drink helps to settle stomach upset or any overly-acidic condition of the digestive system. All ingredients are recommended to be organic.

Place into a cup the following organic ingredients:

- ½ - 1 umeboshi plum or 1 teaspoon of umeboshi plum paste
- ½ - 1 teaspoon of Tamari Sauce or Shoyu (soy sauce)
- 1 Bancha or Kukicha (twig green tea) loose or tea bag

Pour boiling water into cup and stir well. Drink hot.

Ingredients are possibly available at: Food Forest Organics in Greytown and/or Commonsense Organics in Wellington and Lower Hutt

## Miso Soup

Purchase good quality fermented miso. All ingredients are recommended to be organic. For everyday use, purchase barley miso (mugi miso). For a variation you may also use soybean miso (hatcho miso) or brown rice miso (genmai miso).

1. Soak wakame seaweed (2 ½ cm x 2 ½ cm per person) in cold water for approximately 5 minutes and cut into small pieces.
2. Add the soaked wakame to 1 cup per person of fresh cold water and bring to boil. Meanwhile cut some vegetables (carrots, daikon, turnip, and buttercup squash) into small pieces (or vegetable of your choice).
3. Add the vegetables to the boiling broth and boil together for 3 to 5 minutes until vegetables are soft and edible. Lower flame and simmer.
4. Dilute miso (1/2 to 1 level tsp per cup of water boiling) in a little water, then add to soup and simmer for 3-4 minutes on low flame. Please NOTE that it is important NOT TO BRING SOUP TO BOIL AFTER MISO IS ADDED.
5. Can add some chopped leafy greens to soup at same time as miso, as they cook within 3 minutes.
6. Vary the vegetables daily and it is also ok to occasionally add left over grains to soup or udon noodles.

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