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SP441-F-Smart Choices - Tips on Pregnancy - Relief from the Discomforts

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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Recommended Citation
"SP441-F-Smart Choices - Tips on Pregnancy - Relief from the Discomforts," The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service, SP441F-5M-8/00 (rev) R12-1001-16-009-01, http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_agexheal/16

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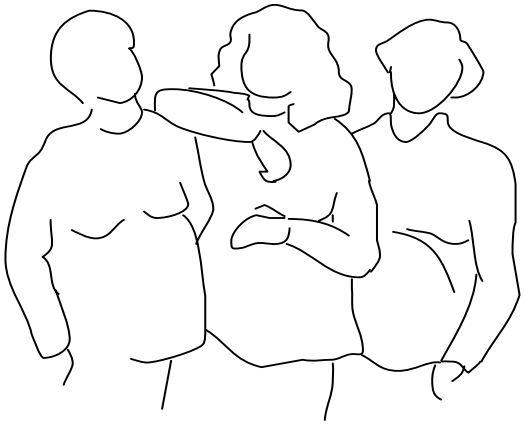
The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Agricultural Extension Service
The University of Tennessee

SP441-F

Smart Choices...

Tips on Pregnancy: Relief from the Discomforts



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Not everyone has discomforts during pregnancy. If you do, the following suggestions may provide some relief.

Do not take drugs or medicines without first asking your doctor or nurse. Even over-the-counter drugs, such as laxatives, antacids and aspirin, may not be good for you and your baby.

Morning Sickness

- Lie down or sit quietly. Move slowly, without sudden movements.
- Try dry crackers, toast or cereal before you get up in the morning. Eat them before you sit up.
- Keep some food in your stomach at all times. Nibble on foods from the bread and cereal, fruit and vegetable groups.
- Drink fluids and eat liquid foods, such as soup, about one-half to one hour before or after you eat solid foods.
- Eat fewer greasy, fried and high-fat foods. They can make your stomach upset.
- Eat fewer spicy and highly seasoned foods, if they make your stomach upset.
- Try juice, fruit-flavored drinks and caffeine-free soft drinks. Caffeine may irritate your stomach.
- Try to get fresh air and exercise often. Walking usually is good exercise when you are pregnant.

Constipation

- Eat foods that are high in dietary fiber, such as whole wheat bread, bran cereal, wheat cereal, dried beans, raw fruit and vegetables (with skins), dried fruit and popcorn.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Try a little water first thing in the morning.

Eat your crackers in bed.

- Have frequent meals and snacks.
- Try to exercise regularly. Take a daily walk.
- Choose foods, such as prunes and prune juice, other dried fruits and apple or pear juice. They sometimes have a laxative effect.

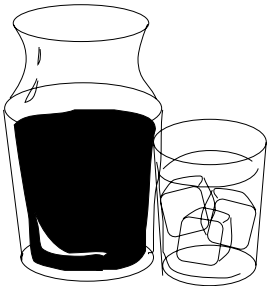
Try a daily walk.

Heartburn

- Eat small meals and snacks. Do not put too much in your stomach at one time.
- Eat your last meal or snack at least two hours before you go to bed.
- Sleep with your head and chest higher than the rest of your body. Raising your head with a pillow or raising the head of your bed by at least 6 inches may help.
- Try to sit or stand for two hours after meals rather than lying down.
- Eat fewer spicy and greasy foods; foods with chocolate, spearmint or peppermint; citrus fruit and tomato products.
- Drink fewer soft drinks and coffee. These can give you heartburn or make it worse.
- Reduce or avoid cigarette smoking. It may make heartburn worse.
- Practice deep breathing.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Drink small amounts of fluids with meals. Drink larger amounts between meals.
- Try to relax when you eat. Chew foods well.

Leg Cramps

- Exercise regularly. Try a daily walk.
- Apply a warm cloth, hot water bottle or heating pad to the aching muscles.
- Massage muscles.
- Stretch muscles by straightening cramped leg and flexing foot.
- Elevate legs several times a day.
- Wear flat-heeled shoes.
- Reduce soft drinks.



Drink small amounts with meals.

SP441F-5M-8/00 (rev) R12-1001-16-009-01

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