

## HEMORRHOIDS

Increasing pressure, poor blood flow and straining to pass bowel movements can cause hemorrhoids (enlarged veins of the rectum), which can be painful. If your hemorrhoids bleed, notify your health care provider.

### TIPS

- Maintain your regular bowel habits and keep the bowel movements soft by drinking plenty of water, juice and milk.
- Eat foods like whole grains, raw fruits and vegetables.
- Put your feet on a step stool when having a bowel movement. Breathe out while pushing.
- Avoid sitting for long periods of time. Sitting on a small inner tube may help if sitting for long periods cannot be avoided.

## VAGINAL DISCHARGE

During pregnancy, it may be normal to have a thick white discharge from the vagina. Contact your health care provider if you find that the discharge has changed to bloody, yellow, green, or dark color; is heavy, foamy, or causes burning and itching.

### TIPS

- Do not use tampons or douche while you are pregnant.
- Avoid using minipads unless absolutely necessary. They may cause irritation to the vulva.
- Bathe daily. Avoid perfumed soaps and bubble baths.
- Wear cotton panties and loose comfortable clothing.



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# RELIEF FROM COMMON DISCOMFORTS OF PREGNANCY

## – PART TWO –

- **Changes in**
  - Skin
  - Breasts
  - Mouth
  - Back
- **Swelling and Varicose Veins**
- **Hemorrhoids**
- **Vaginal Discharge**



**This pamphlet tells you about changes that may occur during your pregnancy.  
Tips are given for helping with the discomforts that may come with these changes.**

**REMEMBER:** Contact your health care provider if you think you have a health problem or before taking any prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, or a home remedy.

## CHANGES IN YOUR SKIN

As the skin stretches on your belly and breasts, you may notice dark or red lines. You may notice darker skin on your face or below your belly button. You may sweat more.

### TIPS

- These color changes fade and sweating may lessen after the birth of your baby.

## CHANGES IN YOUR BREASTS

Your breasts may become larger, firmer, and more tender. They may feel more lumpy. The nipples and the area around the nipples will be darker and the breast veins will look blue. You may also notice sticky drops of breast milk.

### TIPS

- When you bathe, clean your nipples with warm water only – no soaps.
- Dry them well.
- Wear a good support bra.

## CHANGES IN YOUR MOUTH

Your gums may get red and bleed. Your teeth decay more easily while you are pregnant.

### TIPS

- Brush and floss your teeth gently, at least twice a day.
- See your dentist while you are pregnant – be sure to tell him you are pregnant.

## CHANGES IN YOUR BACK

During pregnancy, the uterus is growing and pulling on your back muscles. This will change how you stand. Your hip joints loosen and may become sore. This may cause a change in the way you walk and in your balance, which can lead to backaches.

### TIPS

Your back may ache less if you:

- wear low-heeled shoes.
- stand or sit with a straight back.
- avoid heavy lifting. (If you have to lift something, bend at the knees rather than the waist.)

## SWELLING AND VARICOSE VEINS

As your uterus gets bigger, it will cause pressure and slow down the blood return from your legs. Mild swelling is normal due to the increase of fluids in your bloodstream. Swelling that does not go away overnight or happens suddenly is not normal. If this happens, contact your health care provider.

Sometimes the leg veins get larger (varicose veins). This problem may be worse if you have been pregnant before or have a family history of varicose veins.

### TIPS

- Exercise – take short walks daily.
- Change position frequently
- Put your feet up and sit with legs uncrossed.
- Avoid tight stockings, especially knee high stockings.
- Support hose can be helpful if you are on your feet a lot.