

### **Nausea and Vomiting of Pregnancy**

Nausea and vomiting related to pregnancy usually begins 4-7 weeks past conception and resolves by gestational week 16. Possible etiology causes are, but not limited to, elevated HCG levels, hyperthyroidism, or low prolactin levels. Non pregnant related factors can also contribute to this, such as peptic ulcer disease, appendicitis, biliary colic, pancreatitis, etc.

In pregnant women, nutritional deficiencies resulting from persistent nausea and vomiting may lead to dehydration, vitamin and electrolyte depletion, urinary tract infections and other metabolic disorders.

A thorough risk assessment of identifying nausea and vomiting factors will be assessed at each prenatal visit. Nutritional Management of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy includes:

- Drinking fluids as tolerated with half water/half electrolyte beverages
- Small frequent meals with high protein/high carbohydrate diet
- Vitamin supplements such as Vitamin B6 (25mg 3 times daily) and Ginger (250mg 4 times daily)
- If patient needs pharmacological therapy, antiemetic such as: Phenergan and Zofran may be prescribed.

Following is a dietary and non-pharmacologic management of nausea and vomiting of pregnancy:

- Eat frequently and in small amounts. Avoid having an empty stomach.
- Eat high carbohydrate / low fat diet
- Eat meals containing high protein content
- Eat a bland, dry diet (ie – chips, crackers)
- Avoid spicy, offensive foods and smells
- Drink frequently and in small amounts. Recommended beverages include: cold clear carbonated liquids, lemonade, ginger ale, and supplemental nutritional products (ie – Ensure, Boost, Carnation Instant Breakfast Ready to Drink)
- Lie down as needed
- Get plenty of rest
- Change positions slowly; especially, when rising.
- Go outside for fresh air as needed
- Avoid iron containing preparations
- Don't brush your teeth right after eating. Tooth brushing may cause excessive salivation, which can aggravate nausea. The smell of toothpaste itself may also precipitate nausea. Women with nausea and vomiting of pregnancy are advised to wait 1 hour after eating to brush their teeth.