



Common Discomforts

What can I try for common discomforts before I call my midwife?

Leg Cramps/Pain

- Stretch muscles gently
- Gently massage the area
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Straighten your leg and point your heel
- Plenty of exercise

Round Ligament Pain

- Flexing her knees onto her abdomen
- Bending toward the pain to ease the stretch on the ligament
- Pelvic tilt
- Taking warm baths
- Applying a heating pad or ice to the area

Back Pain/Sciatica

- Wear low heeled shoes
- Use good posture when sitting and standing
- Avoid lifting heavy objects
- Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time
- Sleep on your side on a supportive mattress
- Back massage
- Relax in a warm bath or ice to area
- Wear a good supportive bra
- Keep knees higher than your hips
- Pelvic rock exercises

Abdominal pain

- Increase fluids
- Change positions frequently
- Relax in a warm bath

Constipation and Hemorrhoids

- Regular exercise
- Drink plenty of water, at least 2 quarts a day, try drinking warm fluids
- Eat a high fiber diet with fresh fruits and vegetables, beans and whole grains
- Avoid lifting heavy objects
- Apply ice packs to affected area

- Use Witch Hazel pads as needed on affected area
- Epsom salt bath to help reduce hemorrhoids
- Preparation H at the pharmacy
- Never hold back a bowel movement

Urinary Frequency

- Urinary frequency is a discomfort of pregnancy that often occurs at two different times during pregnancy. Frequency during the first trimester is due to the increased weight and position changes of the uterus putting direct pressure on the bladder. Urinary frequency during the third trimester occurs due to the baby putting direct pressure on the bladder. This pressure will make you feel like you need to urinate when there is very little urine in the bladder.
- As your uterus and baby grow the space in your pelvis has less room for your bladder to fill with urine and you will feel the need to urinate sooner.
- The only relief measure you can try is to decrease your fluid intake before bed so you will need not to make as many trips to the bathroom when you are trying to sleep

Varicose veins

- Avoid standing for long periods of time
- Avoid sitting cross legged for a long period of time
- Wear maternity support stockings daily
- Spend time lying down with your feet elevated
- Avoid tight clothing

Insomnia

- Exercise frequently
- Participate in a bedtime routine
- Avoid napping throughout the day
- Avoid coffee, chocolate, and cola
- Take a warm bath prior to bed
- Have a light snack with a warm drink prior to bed

Shortness of breath and light headedness

- Use good posture and sit up straight, take frequent slow deep breaths
- Keep a slow pace and rest when feeling tired
- Drink plenty of water everyday
- Raise your arms above your head
- Avoid lying flat on your back

Swelling especially in the legs and ankles

- Avoidance of constrictive clothing
- Elevation of the legs periodically throughout the day
- Positioning on the side when lying down
- A maternity support or girdle which may take the pressure off the pelvic veins

Heartburn, indigestion and flatus

- Eat small, frequent meals, to avoid overloading of your stomach
- Maintain good posture to give more room for your stomach to function and avoid pressure on your stomach
- Don't lie down just after eating
- Stretch your arms high over your head, to give room for your stomach
- Avoid fats with meals
- Avoid liquids with meals
- Avoid very cold foods with meals.
- Avoid spicy or greasy foods or other foods causing indigestion.
- Drink cultured milk rather than sweet milk this has helped some women.
- Drink skim milk and/or eat low-fat ice cream
- Avoid heavy foods or a full meal just before bedtime.
- You can try antacid over the counter such as Maalox, Mylanta, Gaviscon, and milk of magnesia.
- Regular pattern of daily bowel movements and avoid eating gas forming foods.
- Knee-chest position will help with discomfort from gas
- Elevate head of bed with pillows while sleeping

Fatigue

- Exercise Daily
- Lay down at least once a day

Dizziness/ Faintness

- Change positions slowly
- Drink plenty of water
- Eat regular meals with snacks in between
- Do not stay in sun
- Lie on left or right side
- If continued dizziness, call healthcare provider