



Insomnia while pregnant

Insomnia is when you can't sleep. Most pregnant women have insomnia sometime. It seems to happen most in early and late pregnancy.

Insomnia can happen in more than one way. You might have trouble falling asleep at night. Or you might wake up in the middle of the night or too early in the morning. You can't get back to sleep.

It is vital to get plenty of rest during pregnancy. You need at least 8 hours of sleep every night.



CAUSES

Changes in hormones and other things that cause insomnia during pregnancy are:

- Caffeine, even in small amounts
- Needing to pass urine more often
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stress, fear, worry, or bad dreams
- Overheating and sweating
- Not enough exercise
- The baby's kicking and moving around
- Large meal close to bedtime
- Can't find a comfy sleep position

Some medical problems can lead to insomnia, too. These include:

- Depression and anxiety disorders
- Overactive thyroid gland
- Shortness of breath caused by heart or lung conditions
- Allergies and early morning wheezing
- Any illness or injury with pain or discomfort

TREATMENT

Look for and address the cause. For example, if you stop taking caffeine, you may sleep better. Ask your health care provider for ways to treat medical problems that cause your insomnia.

Some doctors may prescribe sleep medicine late in the 3rd trimester to treat false labor.



TRIAGE QUESTIONS



Is your pregnancy keeping you from getting enough sleep?

NO
↓

YES →

CALL DOCTOR



USE SELF-CARE



SELF-CARE

- Get regular, moderate exercise earlier in the day. Discuss your exercise routine with your doctor.
- Avoid caffeine in all forms, if you can.
- Don't drink alcohol during pregnancy.
- In the evening, dim the lights in the house.
- If overheating and sweating is a problem, wear light nightclothes.
- Don't do things that hold your attention and keep you awake. Example: watching a suspense movie on TV.
- Count sheep. Slow counting is a soothing thing to do. Picture an image that repeats over and over.
- Avoid taking technology in the bedroom.
- Eat or drink things that may have a calming effect.
 - Whole grain cereals, breads, and fruits. These are high in carbohydrates.
 - Name-brand teas without caffeine are safe. Beware of certain herbal or "natural" teas. They may contain things that can be harmful. Examples: sassafras, mistletoe, bittersweet, spotted hemlock. Ask your doctor about drinking chamomile, licorice, peppermint, or raspberry leaf teas. (Don't drink too much liquid 1 to 2 hours before bedtime. Otherwise, you may have to get up to pass urine.)
- Take a warm shower or bath before you go to bed. This relaxes your body. Be careful not to slip, though. Use a rubber mat in the tub or shower. Step out of the shower or bath to a non-skid rug.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and comfy. Use fresh, clean sheets and pillowcases. Keep the room temperature just right—not too warm; not too cold.
- Keep a consistent bedtime and wake up time. If you nap, do so earlier in the day.
- Set up a regular bedtime routine. Example: First, check the doors and windows. Next, brush your teeth. Then read or do a quiet, calming activity. Then go to bed.
- Use your bed for sleep and for sex. Sex can be calming before you go to sleep.
- Find the perfect sleep position. Try lying on your left side. Support your belly with a pillow. Put another pillow between your legs.
- Download a sleep app that offers self-guided meditation, nature sounds, or other white noise.
- Use relaxing and breathing methods. You can learn these in childbirth classes.
- Don't take sleeping pills that you can buy without a prescription. **{Note: Don't take any medicine without your health care provider's okay.}**