

B O N U S

CREATING A BABY FRIENDLY BODY

YOUR WEEK BY WEEK JOURNEY TO A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

Early Pregnancy Signs Bonus

Every woman is different and every woman may experience different things in early pregnancy. Each month you're likely to wonder if a cramp or a wave of nausea might be a very early sign of pregnancy so I thought I'd create a list of pregnancy symptoms that other women have had even before they missed their period or took a pregnancy test.

One of the first things that most women feel is tender and swollen breasts. It is your hormones that make your breasts feel tender, tingly, itchy, or sore. Your breasts may also feel fuller and heavier. You may also notice that your areolas will darken at the beginning of pregnancy. Montgomery's Tubercles is something else to look for. These are the small pimple looking bumps around your nipple. It is normal in pregnancy for these bumps to become more noticeable.

Most women will have a delayed or missed period. Occasionally, some women will have a period and not realize that they are pregnant. I have a friend who had a period, then she didn't have sex with her husband for a month, then she missed her period but thought that was odd and that she couldn't be pregnant because she hadn't had sex in the prior month. Well she was indeed pregnant...with twins...and when they did the ultrasound, they found that she had conceived and then had a period (though it was a lighter period than normal for her).

You may feel tired, due to changing hormones, low blood sugar, lower blood pressure and increased blood production. These things can totally zap your energy. You will feel like taking a nap, even if you aren't a nap taker. I remember my sister-in-law, Debbie, telling me that she was laying on the floor playing with her 3 year old son, and she fell asleep in the floor. She suddenly awoke when he jumped off the couch. It was then that she realized she was pregnant - before she had even missed her period.

In some women, when the egg is implanting, you might have slight cramping and spotting. This happens when the fertilized egg attaches itself to the lining of the uterus, between 6-12 days after fertilization. If you have the spotting, it will be earlier than your normal period time. Abdominal cramping is very common during early pregnancy. These cramps are very similar to menstrual cramps. I normally don't get cramps, but with each of my pregnancies, I had light cramping for a couple of weeks starting when my period was due.

Morning sickness can strike any time of the day or night and can include vomiting and queasiness. This can also happen as early as two weeks after conception. The nausea and vomiting is caused by rapidly rising levels of estrogen, which causes the stomach to empty more slowly. Pregnancy also causes a heightened sense of smell, so some odors, especially from cooking, perfume or cigarettes can cause a strong wave of nausea and vomiting.



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Once your hormones start changing, you may find yourself turning up your nose at foods that you loved before getting pregnant. Things like coffee and fried foods will get to you. Food cravings are also normal in pregnancy, especially in the first trimester. Heartburn can be among the symptoms caused by elevated hormones, as well.

Increased blood circulation, which is caused by hormonal changes, may trigger frequent, mild headaches.

You may start to feel constipated due to an increase in progesterone, which causes food to pass more slowly through your intestines. At the same time you will find yourself in the bathroom more often, urinating. This is all caused by hormonal changes.

Also when all those hormones start raging through your body, you will feel more emotional and weepy. You may find yourself snapping at your partner and friends when you are not normally that way.

You may also feel faintness and dizziness as your blood vessels dilate and your blood pressure drops. Early in your pregnancy, the faintness can be triggered by low blood sugar.

If you have been taking your basal body temperature (BBT) to find out when you are ovulating and you continue to check it each morning, you will find that it stays up for two weeks or longer if you are pregnant.

A low backache is very common during early pregnancy, as well as a dull backache during your entire pregnancy.

Bloating and weight gain is a big sign. All of a sudden your tummy may pooch out just a little and your jeans won't fit as well as before.

And here are a few more early pregnancy signs that other women have experienced:

- Pelvic twinges
- Temperature dip
- Acne break out
- Metal taste in mouth
- Soft and high cervix



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- Vaginal area dark purple
 - Sensitive gag reflex
 - Salivating endlessly
 - Frequent nosebleeds or nasal congestion

Early pregnancy symptoms can mimic hormonal imbalances. Infertility medications can prompt many of these symptoms. Peri-menopause can also prompt these symptoms - or just having hormonal imbalances will often times mimic pregnancy symptoms. This is because these symptoms are all brought on by the hormonal changes associated with pregnancy.

Sometimes though, you can be pregnant and not feel any of these symptoms. No two women are alike, but most women on average will feel one if not all of the symptoms I have listed for you. I hope this short guide helps with your questions about how you are feeling during this special time of your life.

Kirstyn Sierra



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