

Constipation

Why does constipation occur during pregnancy?

Constipation occurs when your stomach and other digestive organs slow down due to the effects of the hormones of pregnancy and due to a decrease in abdominal space from the enlarging uterus. Iron in your prenatal vitamins can also cause constipation.

Side effects of constipation:

- Maternal discomfort
- Hemorrhoids (caused by straining and pressure on the veins in the pelvic area)

How to avoid constipation:

- Eat a high fiber diet including whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables
 - All Bran Cereal
 - Bran Buds
 - Bran Chex
 - Bran Flakes
 - Shredded Wheat
 - Grape Nuts
 - Corn Bran
 - Crackling Oat Bran
 - Popcorn (air popped)
 - Whole wheat breads
 - Kidney, Navy, and Lima beans
 - All vegetables (raw and cooked)
 - All fruits (especially raw and fresh)
 - Raisins
 - Prunes
 - Prune juice
 - Whole wheat pasta
- Drink plenty of water (recommend 2-3 quarts per day)
- Avoid caffeine
- Get regular exercise. Walking is easy and effective.
- Do not delay when the feeling to have a bowel movement occurs.
- Avoid over the counter laxatives.
- If these changes do not relieve the constipation, discuss it with your provider.