

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	Whole wheat breads
Bran Buds	Kidney, Navy, and Lima beans
Bran Chex	All vegetables (raw and cooked)
Bran Flakes	All fruits (especially raw and fresh)
Shredded Wheat	Raisins
Grape Nuts	Prunes
Corn Bran	Prune juice
Crackling Oat Bran	Whole wheat pasta
Popcorn (air popped)	
- 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.