

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

Try as many of the following strategies as you can:

- Take it one day at a time and just do all you can to make it easier. Don't focus on how many weeks you have left or how you will deal with another day of being sick.
- Give yourself permission to rest as much as you need, and listen to your body.
- Do whatever is necessary to cope, including quitting your job or hiring help (e.g. teen, doula).
- Avoid major stressors such as moving until you have recovered.
- Ask for help. Make a list of ways others can help and let them choose what best suits their skills and schedule.
- Arrange for someone to visit or call often to avoid depression and isolation.
- Ask others to drive you to appointments and stores to avoid fatigue.
- Order groceries, gifts, and necessities online. (See <http://HelpHER.org/mothers/online-resources/index.php>)
- Talk to your doctor about using apple juice or jelly beans (medical studies show this is acceptable) instead of Glucola to test for gestational diabetes.
- Purchase Ketostix from a drug store or online and test your urine daily when you are ill. These indicate if you are not getting enough calories.
- Try ice cold foods and beverages which have less smell if frozen.
- Have a variety of simple foods nearby in case you feel you can eat. Cold foods can be kept in a cooler or mini-fridge.
- Eat a snack before getting off of the sofa or out of bed. Try to sip fluids and eat small meals often.
- Use foam mattress pads and extra pillows to ease the pain of being inactive, and decrease motion.
- Read others' experiences of HG, and contact them for support. HG can be very traumatic and seeking professional counseling is often helpful. (Find more info at: <http://HelpHER.org/mothers/get-support/support-groups.php>).

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL CARE

You may wonder if you have morning sickness or Hyperemesis. Generally, if you are unable to eat or drink due to nausea or vomiting and are losing weight, you have HG. Research is confirming that proactive medical care of HG can decrease the severity of symptoms. This means beginning effective treatment at the onset of HG and being closely monitored for dehydration and starvation.



Call your health professional if you experience any of the following:

- Abdominal pain, bleeding, or cramping
- Muscular weakness or severe cramping
- Incessant vomiting or retching
- Vomit is red with blood or yellow with bile
- Little food or fluids stay down for over 24 hours
- Weight loss of two pounds (0.9 kg) or more in a week
- Difficulty thinking or focusing
- Difficulty walking or talking



- Visual disturbances or fainting
- Little saliva and very dry mouth
- Moderate or severe headache or fever
- Shortness of breath or dizziness
- Urinating small amounts infrequently
- Urine is dark yellow or foul smelling

CONTACT INFORMATION

MEDIA/MARKETING QUESTIONS

Read about HER in the news by viewing our press kit under "Press Center" on our website, and/or e-mail Colleen Matthews at media@helpHER.org for information about bringing awareness to hyperemesis gravidarum through the media.

QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR CURRENT RESEARCH

E-mail us at Info@helpHER.org if you have questions about HER Foundation Research, collaborating with the HER Foundation, or our preliminary results.

GENERAL COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

E-mail us at Info@helpHER.org if you have a comment, question, or concern about Hyperemesis Gravidarum or the HER Foundation.



HER FOUNDATION

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*When Your Loved One
has Hyperemesis Gravidarum*



Only women who experience
hyperemesis truly understand
its profound effects
on every facet of their lives.

Your help is vital to their survival!



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Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) is a debilitating and potentially life-threatening pregnancy disease marked by rapid weight loss, malnutrition, and dehydration due to unrelenting nausea and/or vomiting with potential adverse consequences for the newborn(s).

Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) can be overwhelming and greatly impact both you and your family. At a minimum, it will disrupt your daily activities and make it difficult or impossible to fulfill many of your responsibilities for some time. It can also result in job loss, as well as render you completely dependent on those around you. Most women are ill for three or four months, fewer experience vomiting or nausea until the birth of their child. It can be traumatic emotionally and some families will choose to forego future pregnancy plans. Often, proactive and aggressive treatment can alleviate much of your misery and lessen the adverse impact on your life. Finding a health care professional with this thinking and experience, however, can be a challenge. This guide will provide you with ideas for coping with and managing your condition. Hopefully it will also empower you to make informed decisions and survive HG with less suffering.

TYPICAL CHALLENGES

Mothers with Hyperemesis face a number of challenges beyond nausea and vomiting that can be difficult for others to understand, including profound fatigue,

sleepiness, weakness, and pain. Knowing you are not alone can be very reassuring and helpful.



FOOD AVERSIONS/CRAVINGS

One of the most common experiences among women with HG is food aversions and cravings. You may have intense and bizarre cravings and aversions that those around you need to accept and support. It's not something you can control if you try harder, and ignoring your preferences can greatly worsen your symptoms. The primary goals are staying hydrated and increasing your food intake as much as you can tolerate. You may feel desperate to find anything you can eat, but also terrified at the thought of vomiting again. Just do the best you can and try not to worry about your baby.

HYPEROLFACATION

Another almost universal challenge with HG is hyperolfaction, which essentially means your sense of smell is greatly increased. You may smell what others don't. It can be frustrating and distressful. Along with an increased sense of smell are changes in taste. Some foods may have strange textures or tastes to you and become aversive. It is not something you can control. Try to identify and avoid the triggers of your nausea/vomiting. This may mean avoiding the kitchen, riding the subway, being around smokers, traveling, eating away from home, changing diapers, etc. Unfortunately, there is no known treatment other than time. Often it eases by mid-pregnancy, but many women have some triggers until delivery.

With all of these challenges, aggressive care to decrease your vomiting and nausea can decrease the intensity, making it easier for you to cope. Some medications (e.g. Zofran) may reduce your sensitivity to odors and motion, as well as food aversions. The more severe your symptoms are, the more sensitive you are to triggers of nausea and vomiting. Eliminating as many triggers from your environment as possible is very important.

COMMON CAUSES OF DEPRESSION, GUILT, ANXIETY, AND/OR FRUSTRATION

The following list includes common causes of depression, guilt, anxiety and/or frustration. Knowing these can help you and your family/friends cope during this time.

- Lack of understanding and support
- Inability to have a 'fun,' healthy pregnancy
- Painful and potentially risky treatments



- Employment and financial stress
- Putting life 'on hold' and isolation
- Longing to eat and drink normally
- Irritability, fatigue, and lack of enjoyment
- Memory loss or inability to think clearly
- Burden of care and time on others
- Inability to care for family and prepare for baby

- Thoughts of terminating to end the misery
- Loss of hope that symptoms will end
- Weight loss or inadequate gain
- Inability to cope or function

TYPICAL TRIGGERS OF NAUSEA/VOMITING

Eliminate or minimize as many of these as possible:

- Fear of harming baby or dying
- Blinking/bright lights
- Sight/thought/smell food (e.g. TV)
- Noise (e.g. TV, kids)
- Toothpaste
- Motion (e.g. travel)
- Standing or sitting
- Empty stomach
- Odors (e.g. scented cosmetics, chemicals)
- Sleeping with a partner (smells and motion)

SMOOTHIE RECIPE

Blend Together:

- 1/2 - 1 cup fresh juice (pasteurized)
- 1 frozen banana
- 1+ cups frozen fruit (berries)
- Protein powder
- Nuts
- 1 - 2 Tbs honey or pure maple syrup
- 1/2 - 1+ cup yogurt, milk or milk substitute (Enriched rice/almond/soy milk)
- Ice (optional)

This can be adapted to your individual preferences for texture and flavor. Adding nutritional yeast, wheat germ, or nuts is a great way to get extra nutrients. Soft nuts like macadamias grind into a smooth texture, while almonds add crunch. Ice cream or sorbet may also be used for extra calories. Flavorings (e.g. vanilla), protein powder, and coconut milk can also be added if desired. Liquid meals, especially those with protein, can decrease nausea more than solids, and they may be easier to keep down. Try it postpartum too, to ensure you get the added calories, fatty acids, and nutrients you need for breastfeeding and recovery. (See: <http://HelpHER.org/mothers/treatments/nutritional-therapy/index.php>)