

Trouble Sleeping During Pregnancy

Problems falling and staying asleep (insomnia) are very common during pregnancy, especially during the third trimester. There are many causes of insomnia and several approaches you might take to help you sleep more.

What causes trouble sleeping during pregnancy?

Trouble sleeping during pregnancy may be caused by:

- Hormonal changes in your body
- The need to go to the bathroom more often because your uterus is getting bigger and putting pressure on your bladder
- Difficulty finding a comfortable position in bed
- An active baby (a small jabbing fist or foot can keep you awake)
- The excitement and anticipation of birth that makes it hard to relax your mind as well as your body
- Frequent and sometimes frightening dreams about labor and delivery or possible problems with the baby
- The feeling that you can't breathe when you lie down flat on your back (if the baby is pressing on your lungs)

How can I help myself get some sleep?

Try any of the following measures that you think might help:

- Exercise regularly during the day.
- Drink a warm, non-caffeinated, nonalcoholic drink at bedtime.
- Take a warm (not hot) bath at bedtime.
- Read before you try to go to sleep.
- Ask your partner to help you relax by giving you a back, neck, or shoulder rub with a soothing lotion.
- Use the muscle relaxation techniques taught in childbirth classes.
- Listen to some soothing music or nature sounds in bed.
- Lie on your left side with one pillow supporting your abdomen and another between your legs.
- Lie down with your head and chest higher than your abdomen.
- Avoid sleeping pills, unless directed by your healthcare provider.

If necessary, you might have to lie down for short periods of rest or sleep during the day to make up for your loss of sleep during the night.

If you are having troubling dreams, you might find it helpful to speak with someone you trust such as your partner, a close friend, or your healthcare provider.

Is there anything my healthcare provider can do to help?

If you notice other worries such as feelings of depression, overwhelming anxiety, or if you think about suicide, call your healthcare provider immediately. If are waking up with difficulty breathing, or if your lack of sleep becomes such a problem that your mental and physical health are suffering, tell your healthcare provider right away. Your provider may prescribe one of the sedatives that can be taken safely during pregnancy.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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