

# Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies

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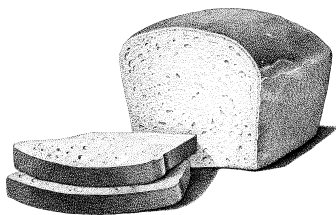
## Constipation

What happens to cause constipation while you are pregnant? This is due to the increased pressure on your uterus from your growing baby. Also, higher levels of hormones during pregnancy slow digestion.

Try these tips:

- Eat more food high in fiber. Foods high in fiber include:

>Whole grain breads and cereals



>Fresh vegetables

>Fresh and dried fruits

>Low-salt peanuts and pecans

>Popcorn

>Cooked beans

- Drink more liquid. At least 8 glasses of fluids are recommended each day. Liquids can be water, fruit juice, soups.



- Drinking warm water when you get up may be helpful.
- Increase your usual daily physical activity. Be sure to check with your doctor about exercises best for you.

>Stationary bicycling

>Prenatal exercises

>Swimming

>Walking



NOTE: Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter laxatives for constipation. Also, do not use mineral oil.

### **Suggested Readings:**

Dairy Council of California (1990). *Pregnancy: A special time for nutrition and good health*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Maternal and Infant Health, Department of Public Health, City of Philadelphia (1990). *Healthy foods, healthy baby*. Maternal and Infant Health, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, 500 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146.

Smith, P., and Coats C. (1988). *How to be perfectly pregnant*. Orlando, FL: Carolyn Coats' Bestsellers.

### **References:**

Anderson, A., and Whichelow, M. (1985). Constipation during pregnancy: Dietary fiber intake and the effect of fibre supplementation. *Human Nutrition and Applied Nutrition*, 39A, 202-207.

Eisenberg, Arlene, Murkoff, Heidi E., and Hathaway, Sandee. E. (1986) *What to eat when you're expecting*. New York: Workman Publishing Company, Inc.

Gong, E. (1990). Discomforts of pregnancy. In M. Story (Ed.) *Nutrition management of the pregnant adolescent* (pp. 85-89). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse.

March of Dimes. (1992) *Eating for two: Nutrition during pregnancy*. White Plains, NY: Author.



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