

When the thrill
of pregnancy
is marred by
morning sickness,
homeopathy
can help

by JAMIE OSKIN, ND,
LAURINDA KWAN, ND,
and NATALIE HAM, ND



“THIS BABY IS REALLY DOING A NUMBER ON ME!” moaned my friend Jessica, who was newly pregnant. Even though she was miles away and talking to me by cell phone, I (Dr. Natalie Ham) could hear the pain and strain in her voice. When a friend or loved one is hurting, I naturally want to help, and Jessica gladly accepted my offer.



I Feel Sick!

At 10 weeks into her pregnancy, Jessica's main problem was nausea. It was worse in the morning and better if she ate a small amount of food. If she ate too much, however, she would suddenly feel much worse, to the point of vomiting. The sight and smell of the food she was eating at that moment would become intolerable, and she would have to get it away immediately. Even thinking about the food would make her nausea much worse.

A common complaint

Although it was little consolation at the time, Jessica is not alone. It's estimated that 80 percent of pregnant women experience morning sickness. In fact, "morning

sickness" is a misnomer because the nausea and vomiting of pregnancy can happen any time of day. This condition affects women primarily during the first three months of pregnancy and tends to improve after that. In severe cases, however, unremitting vomiting and nausea may last throughout the pregnancy—sometimes even after giving birth.

While no definitive answer exists as to what causes nausea during pregnancy, it is likely a combination of a rapid rise in pregnancy hormones: human chorionic gonadotropin and estrogen. Women are more likely to have nausea or vomiting if they are pregnant with twins or higher multiples, or if they have a history of nau-

sea and vomiting in a previous pregnancy.

Of course, just because morning sickness is common doesn't mean it's not a challenge for expectant moms. Even mild cases of nausea can wear a person down and interfere with everyday life—and vomiting can be especially debilitating. In most cases, as long as the pregnant woman is staying hydrated and keeping some food down, nausea and vomiting do not put the pregnancy at risk, even if she gains no weight or loses a little bit in the early weeks.

Conventional treatment for pregnant women with mild nausea and vomiting typically includes antihistamines that suppress the central nervous system—such as Unisom® or Benadryl®. The FDA categorizes drugs as A, B, C, D, or X, with regard to safety during pregnancy, and these antihistamines are considered Category B or relatively safe. They do, however, have side effects such as drowsiness, dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation, insomnia, upset stomach, nervousness, and headaches. Another Category B drug, Zofran®, is becoming a frequent, but very expensive, anti-nausea prescription for women with severe morning sickness. Yet another frequently prescribed antihistamine/anti-motion sickness drug, Phenergan®, is in Category C because it carries an increased risk for fetal malformations.

Given the risks and side effects of these conventional treatments, it's no wonder that many pregnant women seek alternative ways to relieve their morning sickness. Like Jessica, they welcome homeopathic treatment because of its strong record of safety and effectiveness.

Weighing possible remedies

As I listened to Jessica describe her nausea of pregnancy, which was worse in the morning, worse after eating, worse when looking at food, worse while smelling food, and worse at the thought of food, I was able to narrow my choices to three potential homeopathic remedies that share this collection of indications: *Colchicum*, *Cocculus indicus*, and *Sepia*.

Jessica then offered some key information that would help me settle on one remedy. "I feel the sickest in the morning," she said, "but later when I start doing things,

like cleaning the house or walking the dog or whatever, I don't feel quite as nauseous." When I asked her to clarify that, she said it was the actual movement and exertion of doing these things that helped her feel better; it wasn't just the distraction of the activity. In fact, she felt more nauseated when she remained still. "I do get super-tired a lot, too," she added. "Actually, I feel exhausted every day at 2 p.m. *on the dot*. Then it lifts around 4 p.m. and I feel a little better. At bedtime, though, I'm back to feeling really sick again...but never as bad as in the morning."

When I asked if there was anything else that was different since she had started feeling bad—anything at all—she paused for a moment before whispering, "Well, this is really kind of weird but ... I can't stand how Jack smells! I mean, I don't think my husband is doing anything different that would cause him to have an

odor. He says he isn't ... and no one else smells a thing when they're near him ... but to me, he smells terrible! I feel bad, but I have to keep my distance from him, just so I don't smell that yucky smell!"

Basking in the sun

I was pretty certain of the remedy for Jessica at this point, but just to confirm my choice I asked how she felt about going out in the sun: "You know how I've always been a sun worshipper. But this past month, I'm going outside even more than normal. It feels so good just to bask in it, any chance I get."

All these symptoms pointed to *Sepia* over the other two remedies. People who need *Sepia* tend to feel much better with occupation and exertion, which was certainly true for Jessica's nausea. They tend to be fatigued in the afternoon (from 2 to 4 p.m. or 3 to 5 p.m.), and they love being

in the sun. Additionally, they are often very sensitive to odors, especially during pregnancy, and may have an aversion to their loved ones, especially to their spouse. When these two symptoms coexist, the pregnant woman can have an aversion to the smell of her husband; this may sound like an unusual occurrence, but I have seen a number of pregnant women who were averse to the smell of their husbands, and they were all helped by *Sepia*. I suggested that Jessica take *Sepia* 200c, three pellets, three times per day.

Two days later, Jessica called me. "Natalie, this is amazing. I haven't thrown up at all for the last two days! Before I took that remedy, I was retching every day, all morning long!" She had felt only two waves of nausea since starting the remedy, and they were much less intense. This was great news, as her fatigue was about 50 percent better as well. But most thrilling

Natural Nausea Relief

Top 10 self-care steps for morning sickness

In addition to homeopathy, there are other helpful natural treatments for simple morning sickness and the more severe nausea of pregnancy that some women experience. Consider these measures, in consultation with your health provider, of course.

1. Try Acupuncture or Acupressure

See a licensed acupuncturist or try the travel sickness acupressure bands found at drugstores.

2. Up Your B6

Studies show that vitamin B6 may help to relieve the nausea of pregnancy. Increase B6 in your diet by eating more whole grains, bananas, nuts, avocados, lean meats, and fish. (Check www.ewg.org/safefishlist for environmentally safe guidelines for eating fish during pregnancy).

3. Drink Ginger or Peppermint Tea

These herbs help to settle the stomach and decrease queasiness. You can drink them as tea, take them as capsules, or add them to your food.

4. Eat Snacks

Small, frequent meals throughout the day are better than large meals. Try nuts—a good, high-protein snack—since studies suggest that high-protein foods are more likely to settle your stomach and ease nausea.

5. Keep Crackers by Your Bed

If you feel sick at night or in the early morning, reach for the crackers on your nightstand and chew a few. Avoid fatty and spicy crackers or foods, as they can be irritating to your digestive system.

6. Stay Hydrated

Drink water throughout the day. If you have been vomiting, try an electrolyte drink without artificial dyes and additives. Some women find that carbonated drinks settle the stomach. Go for the healthier version—carbonated water with a splash of 100 percent fruit juice.

7. Avoid Nausea Triggers

Stay away from food smells that make you queasy, heavy scents and perfumes, and the motion from car rides.

8. Rest & De-Stress

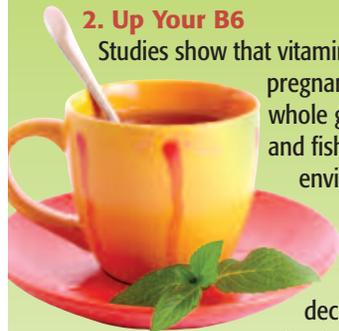
Nausea can worsen with stress and anxiety, so take time to rest and minimize your stress.

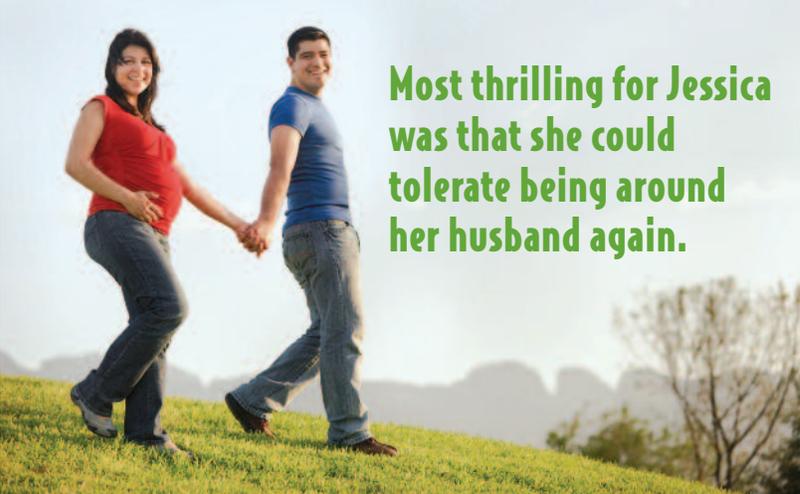
9. Be Smart with Vitamins

Always take your prenatal vitamins with meals because vitamins on an empty stomach can worsen nausea.

10. Ask for Support

It's good to ask for help—even to pay for it if you need it and can afford it. This is especially true if you already have young toddlers running around, as caring for them can be difficult when you are not feeling well.





Most thrilling for Jessica was that she could tolerate being around her husband again.

for Jessica was that she could tolerate being around her husband again. “I can’t believe it. I don’t even notice a smell anymore!” she exclaimed happily.

I asked Jessica to continue the dosing schedule until her symptoms were gone, and then to take the remedy only as needed. After a few weeks, Jessica stopped taking *Sepia*, as her morning sickness and nausea were gone. She is about 28 weeks pregnant now, and we are all looking forward to welcoming the newest addition!

Melissa: Seeking new answers for nausea

Melissa, a 32-year-old nurse at a local hospital, was eight weeks pregnant when she sought help from me (Dr. Jamie Oskin) for extreme nausea. This was her fifth pregnancy, although the first three had ended in miscarriage. With her last pregnancy, Melissa had been so nauseous the entire nine months that she had had trouble gaining weight appropriately. Her conventional doctors had prescribed Zofran® and Phenergan®, but she hadn’t experienced much relief.

Melissa was hoping to avoid taking such drugs this time around but was worried because she was just as intensely nauseated as last time. Whenever she drank or ate anything—even a sip of water—her nausea got much worse. “Even the thought of food makes me nauseous,” Melissa said, “and strong odors from food or perfumes are the absolute worst!” She was especially averse to candy, sweets, meat, pasta with marinara sauce, fish, and pizza. At least twice a day, she would vomit after eating and would feel somewhat relieved afterward; within minutes, however, the feelings of nausea would creep back. “Food doesn’t taste right either... kind of metallic tasting,” she reported.

Melissa’s nausea was so intense that it

interfered with her sleep. When lying down at night, she felt like vomiting. She couldn’t find a comfortable position and would toss and turn before finally falling asleep. Sometimes she

would feel too hot and stick an arm or leg out of the covers to cool off. The nausea would finally get a little better after 4 a.m. In general, Melissa felt worse in a warm, stuffy room and better when she was out in the cool, open air.

An emotional time

Emotionally, Melissa was very worried and weepy. She was especially nervous because her three miscarriages had occurred between six and 12 weeks of pregnancy, and she was at eight weeks now. “I’ve always been someone who tends to cry easily,” Melissa said, “but now that I’m pregnant I cry all the time!” She found herself crying “just about anywhere” and would call her husband or friends to get sympathy, which made her feel a little better. Melissa was so frustrated with the unrelenting nausea that she sometimes got irritable, short-tempered, and impatient with her daughter, husband, and co-workers.

Melissa had a history of hypothyroidism that was being monitored by her obstetrician. Her blood pressure was normal, but she had already lost about four pounds because of the vomiting. Aside from that, her physical exam was normal.

After considering Melissa’s symptoms—her nausea from the smell of food, her weepiness, her amelioration from consolation, her aggravation from drinking and eating, the uncovering of her feet during sleep, and the fact that she felt worse in a warm room and better in the cool, open air—I prescribed *Pulsatilla* 200c, three times a day. Here is my repertorization using RadarOpus software with the Synthesis Treasure Edition 2009 in Quantum View:

Three days later, Melissa called to report that her nausea had been much worse over the past two days, but it was now back to what it was before having taken the remedy. “I feel better emotionally, though... I’m not crying nearly as much,” she volunteered. I analyzed this as a potentially positive response to the remedy; her mood had improved, so perhaps the temporary worsening of her nausea symptoms was a therapeutic aggravation. If so, she should soon experience improvement in her nausea. I asked Melissa to continue taking the *Pulsatilla*.

Still battling nausea

Melissa came in for her first follow-up visit after being on *Pulsatilla* for two weeks. Her nausea and vomiting were no better; in fact, she would get a mild worsening of her nausea with each dose of the remedy. “I do feel better emotionally,” she said, “but right now I really don’t care that I stopped crying all the time. Please, can you just make my nausea go away?” she pleaded.

At that point, I realized that I had incorrectly given her a “big picture” remedy that addressed her chronic state of overall health (as evidenced by the improvement in her overall mood), when what she really needed was a remedy to address her acute condition. Yes, Melissa was very weepy, which is a keynote symptom for people needing *Pulsatilla*, but she was weepy *before* her pregnancy as well. And although *Pulsatilla* fit many symptoms of her nausea, it did not fit like a glove. So I re-analyzed Melissa’s case, focusing more narrowly on her latest and most bothersome problem: her nausea. *Colchicum* seemed to be the best match because it fit her strong symptom of nausea that is worse at the thought and smell of food, especially the smell of fish. It also fit her nausea at the sight of food and nausea that was worse after eating. I prescribed *Colchicum* 30c, once daily. I chose a lower potency with less frequent repetition than I had with the *Pulsatilla*, in

	1466	900	720	710	685	665	605
2. Opboard 2							
1. MIND - WEEPING - easily (27) 1	1	2	2	2	1		
2. MIND - CONSOLATION - amel. (19) 1			2	1			
3. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - smell of (22) 1	1	2	2	2			
4. STOMACH - NAUSEA - pregnancy - during (93) 1	2	2	2	2	2	1	
5. STOMACH - NAUSEA - warm - room - agg. (18) 1	2	1	2				
6. STOMACH - NAUSEA - eating - after - agg. (151) 1	2	2	2	2	1	2	
7. STOMACH - NAUSEA - drinking - after - agg. (48) 1	2	1	2	2	2	1	
8. STOMACH - NAUSEA - air; in open - amel. (22) 1	2		1				
9. EXTREMITIES - UNCOVER, inclination to - Feet (24) 1	1	1		1	1		

hopes of avoiding any more aggravation of her nausea symptoms. See my new repertorization below from RadarOpus using the Synthesis Treasure Edition 2009 in Quantum View:

	1830	745	575	575	5ec	54c	470	480
1. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - thought of (22) 3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
2. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - smell of (22) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
3. STOMACH - NAUSEA - pregnancy - during (83) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2
4. STOMACH - NAUSEA - odors - egg. (16) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
5. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - smell of - fish (1) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
6. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - looking at; on (30) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
7. STOMACH - NAUSEA - eating - after - egg. (151) 1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

On March 28, about 2 weeks later, Melissa reported, “I’ve been doing so much better! I feel nauseous only one or two hours a day now [versus most of the day]. I actually vomit maybe once every other day [versus twice a day].” This was good news, and Melissa was pleased. However, when I questioned her further, I learned that her improvement had leveled off and perhaps even begun to backslide in just the last few days, so I increased the potency and frequency to *Colchicum* 200c twice daily.

Finally, a breakthrough

Three days later, Melissa called: “I started feeling better *immediately* after taking the new remedy. I haven’t thrown up at all in the last two days! I’m sleeping better now, too... maybe 50 percent better.” Since she was reacting positively, I asked her to continue taking the remedy. Melissa also

mentioned that at this point, she had lost seven pounds since the pregnancy began.

About three weeks later, Melissa told me her nausea had continued to improve since we last spoke. Now in her 15th week of pregnancy, she still felt slightly nauseated at times, but it was tolerable and bothered her only if she hadn’t eaten in a while. She hadn’t vomited in several weeks. Since Melissa was still reacting positively to *Colchicum* 200c, I asked her to continue taking it.

One month later, Melissa reported that she was “about the same.” Her nausea was no worse, but no better either, so I increased the potency to *Colchicum* 1M, to be taken as needed for nausea. Melissa did share one exciting piece of news: “Last week when my OB/GYN weighed me, I was up two pounds!” Given that ongoing, severe nausea had prevented her from gaining *any* weight during her last pregnancy, this was an especially good outcome.

In mid-July, in her 27th week of pregnancy, Melissa had gained back all the weight she’d lost since becoming pregnant and was beginning to gain steadily. She reported: “I’m doing great! I’m hardly ever nauseous anymore. And I’m able to keep food and drinks down easily... I can’t even remember the last time I vomited. This is so much better than when I was carrying my daughter. I was sick as a dog that entire pregnancy—and terrified that those anti-nausea drugs were going to hurt the baby. I was so desperate that I took them, even though they barely helped. This is so much safer and better. Thank you!” Melissa’s pregnancy progressed well, and at the end of the summer she delivered a very healthy baby boy.

Bethany: “My brain is spinning”

For most pregnant women, morning sickness begins to improve after their first trimester, but for 31-year-old Bethany, it seemed to be getting worse. At 12 weeks

into her pregnancy, she sought help from me (Dr. Jamie Oskin) for intense nausea that was most severe in the morning. The thought and smell of food only made her feel worse; she especially loathed the smell of eggs and meat and could not eat them. If she vomited even a little bit, her nausea would be relieved for a few minutes. Bethany described the nausea as “in my head. It’s as if my head is being shaken. It feels like my brain is spinning and being tossed about.” Noise made her nausea worse. She felt better if she lay down and didn’t move or change positions. She was chilly, but felt worse in a warm room.

“I’ve been having a lot of trouble sleeping lately,” Bethany told me. “I keep waking up in the middle of the night worrying about my friends and family.” She was also feeling lightheaded, and standing made it worse. “I often have to hold onto something because I feel like I’m going to pass out. My legs feel weak, and they shake when I walk down stairs,” she said.

With tears in her eyes, Bethany revealed, “I had a miscarriage a year ago... I still feel so sad about it.” Whenever she talked or thought about it, she got a lump in her throat. She was bothered if anyone tried to give her sympathy, and she preferred to be alone to think or cry about it. When I asked Bethany which of her problems bothered her the most, she replied, “If you’d asked me a month ago, I would have said it was the miscarriage and feeling bummed over that. But now it’s definitely this morning sickness. It’s miserable to feel this sick!”

Grief, worry, & morning sickness

Bethany’s nausea symptoms seemed similar to those of Melissa’s described above, which the remedy *Colchicum* had helped. But Bethany had some key differentiating symptoms: her vertigo, her leg weakness, and her insomnia caused by worry for others pointed to a different remedy that is also commonly used during pregnancy: *Cocculus*. (See repertorization chart on next page.)

I also considered the well-known grief remedy *Ignatia* for Bethany because she had clearly experienced great loss and grief after her miscarriage, had the classic *Ignatia* lump in the throat, wanted to be alone to cry, and felt worse when anyone tried to console her. But grief was no



For most pregnant women, morning sickness begins to improve after their first trimester, but for 31-year-old Bethany, it seemed to be getting worse.

longer Bethany's main problem—the morning sickness was. And since *Cocculus* can also be indicated for people who have ailments that arise after a grief, I prescribed *Cocculus* 30c once a day.

		1000	600	300	150	75	30	15	6	3	1
1. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - thought of	(22)	1	3	3	2	2					1
2. STOMACH - NAUSEA - food - smell of	(22)	1	2	3	2	2					1
3. STOMACH - NAUSEA - noise egg.	(2)	1	2								
4. HEAD - MOTIONS in head	(83)	1	1	1	2	3	2	2			
5. STOMACH - NAUSEA - motion - agg.	(54)	1	3	1	3	1	3	2			
6. VERTIGO - RISING - after - egg.	(18)	1									
7. EXTREMITIES - WEAKNESS - Legs	(190)	1	3	1	2	2	3	1			
8. SLEEP - SLEEPLESSNESS - cares; from	(10)	1									1

Within a week, Bethany's morning sickness was much improved. "Thank goodness, I'm a lot better," she told me. "It's not gone, but it's probably half as bad as it was. I'm not so lightheaded either." After three weeks, Bethany's morning sickness was 75 percent better than when she first came to me, and she was actually craving food now on occasion. I noted, however, that her symptoms of grief seemed to be stronger now. "Even though I should be overjoyed with the new baby coming, I've been brooding about the miscarriage a lot again," she sighed, choking back tears. "It's hard to focus on anything else." Bethany's grief over the past miscarriage had become more prominent than her morning sickness, which let me know it was time to change remedies. Hahnemann would say that Bethany's grief and morning sickness were two "dissimilar diseases" that exist simultaneously in the same person (*Organon*, Aphorisms 40–42). According to his instructions to use only one homeopathic remedy at a time, I asked Bethany to stop taking the *Cocculus* and to take a single dose of *Ignatia* 10M.

Within days of taking *Ignatia*, Bethany reported feeling emotionally "lighter" and much less sad. She still thought about her miscarriage, but those thoughts didn't immediately give her that lump in the throat, make her want to cry, or consume an inordinate amount of her time.

She continued to feel good for the next two weeks, until her morning sickness began acting up a bit again. *Cocculus* still seemed to fit her symptoms, so I suggested she take *Cocculus* 200c, once a day. Over the next six or eight weeks, Bethany continued to do very well on *Cocculus*, with a 95 percent reduction in morning sickness symptoms. On two occasions, she began to relapse a bit, which prompted me to

Ease the Quease!

Top 7 homeopathic remedies to relieve morning sickness



Here are seven of the more commonly used remedies for simple morning sickness. These can be found at your local health food store in low potencies. Follow the directions on the bottle, usually dosing three or four times a day or as needed. If some improvement is not experienced within a few days, stop and check whether a different remedy might be a better match for your symptoms. Of course, if you have severe or long-lasting symptoms, always consult your health practitioner.

Colchicum: Nausea from the thought, smell, and sight of food. Especially worse from the smell of fish and eggs. Although nausea from the smell of food is a common symptom, if it is the woman's most intense and characteristic symptom, then *Colchicum* should be one of the top remedies you consider.

Cocculus indicus: Nausea is worse with the thought, smell, and sight of food (similar to *Colchicum*). She has no appetite, feels fatigued, and tires easily. She feels chilly. Symptoms are worse in the afternoon. Often the nausea is accompanied by vertigo and loss of sleep because of worry for others.

Ipecacuanha: Violent and persistent nausea all day that can be accompanied by retching, belching, and copious saliva. She may not be able to vomit, but if she does, it does not relieve the nausea.

Nux vomica: Nausea is worse in the morning and from eating. Nausea can make her feel faint, may be constant throughout the day, and is worse upon waking. Very well indicated if the woman is irritable, impatient, and chilly. She may be constipated.

Sepia: Nausea is worse in the morning before eating, but is not made better by eating. Nausea with an empty feeling in the stomach. She is sensitive to odors and craves sour foods. She may feel sad and irritable and indifferent to her family. Exertion improves her symptoms.

Pulsatilla: Nausea is worse in the afternoon and evening. She can crave foods (especially creamy, fatty foods) but feels sick after eating. She is not thirsty, and her nausea is worse in a warm room. This remedy is particularly indicated if the woman is weepy and feels better after receiving sympathy.

Tabacum: Incessant nausea that is worse in a warm room (similar to *Pulsatilla*) and from the smell of tobacco. Intense seasickness or motion sickness in the car that is better in fresh cold air, so the woman may want to open the car window to get the fresh air or go up on the deck of the boat. She wants to uncover the abdomen.



Morning Sickness Mysteries ... Smart Kids?

Despite the widespread existence of morning sickness, scientists don't really know how it works or why it exists. Conducting studies on the subject is tricky because it's unethical to experiment on pregnant women. Animal studies won't work either, since no other mammals are known to experience nausea during pregnancy.

Theories about morning sickness abound, however. Because it is so prevalent, some experts think that the nausea of pregnancy evolved as a defense mechanism—a way to protect mothers from eating anything that might be dangerous to the growing fetus. Morning sickness sufferers are often averse to the sight and smell of meats, fish, and strong-smelling foods—all items that historically might have been more prone to carrying toxins or bacteria. Also, nausea is most common from the sixth to eighteenth week of pregnancy, which is the same time period in which major fetal organs develop and are most susceptible to defects from chemical disruption.

Still, this doesn't explain why some women experience nausea and vomiting during pregnancy and some don't, or why some get mildly ill for a few weeks while others suffer with severe nausea their entire pregnancies. But for those in the throes of morning sickness, here's a little comfort: one study found that children born to women who suffered with morning sickness show greater cognitive skills than those kids whose mothers did not. Furthermore, women who had the worst morning sickness, lasting their entire pregnancy, tended to have the smartest children, according to IQ tests.

increase the potency to 1M and then 10M *Cocculus* daily.

A problem with back pain

At that point, approximately 23 weeks into her pregnancy, Bethany began complaining of low back pain. "The baby is getting heavier, and it's really starting to hurt my back," she said. The pain was much worse in the middle of the night from 2 to 4 a.m., and her lumbar spine felt as if her back "would break." It was a sharp, stitching pain made better from taking a warm shower, lying on a hard surface, and applying hard pressure. She was also having some indigestion and hemorrhoids. She was chilly and cranky toward her husband, even though she wanted him around. Based on these symptoms, I prescribed *Kali carbonicum* 200c once a day, as it is well-known for helping with severe backaches of pregnancy that have sharp, stitching pains and are characteristically worse from 2 to 4 a.m. Bethany called the office an hour later: "Wow! Within 30 minutes of taking that remedy, the pain was *way* better!" she said. She estimated her back pain was 50 percent improved right away, and it continued to get better over the next three weeks.

2. Observed	1400	800	600	400	200	0	200	400	600	800	1000
1. BACK - PAIN - break; as if it would	(43)	1									
2. BACK - PAIN - lying - hard; on something - amel.	(17)	1									
3. GENERALS - WARM - applications - amel.	(43)	1									
4. BACK - PAIN - Lumbar region - stitching pain	(152)	1									
5. BACK - PAIN - pressure - amel.	(35)	1									
6. RECTUM - HEMORRHOIDS - accompanied by - Back - pain in	(12)	1									
7. GENERALS - NIGHT - midnight - after - 2 h - 2-4 h	(4)	1									

At this point, however, Bethany's nausea returned, so I asked her to stop the *Kali carb* and go back to taking a daily dose of *Cocculus*, but in a higher potency (50M). When she came into the office 10 days later, she reported that at first the remedy had seemed to relieve her nausea, but not so much anymore; she had vomited the last three mornings. On questioning Bethany further, I learned that her nausea symptoms were not the same as before. She felt most nauseated now when in a moving car. She was feeling very hot instead of chilly and felt much worse in a warm room. "It's kind of weird," she added, "but I feel better when I raise my shirt and prop it up over my belly; the cool air feels so good on my stomach and makes me less nauseous." These new symptoms pointed to a different remedy, *Tabacum*, which is effective in treating the

nausea of pregnancy as well as motion sickness. It also matched Bethany's unique symptom of wanting her abdomen uncovered in order to relieve nausea.

An emotional blow

Bethany started taking *Tabacum* 30c once a day. Within a week, her nausea was much improved, and the vomiting stopped. Unfortunately, a few weeks after that, at 32 weeks of pregnancy, Bethany received news of the death of a close relative. The intense emotional stress caused her to develop premature labor contractions every five minutes. This was a very worrying situation, as a premature birth comes with many potential complications for the baby. By the time Bethany called me about it, she had already been on bed rest for five days, as ordered by her midwife.

Bethany described intensely painful contractions in her abdomen. She also felt extremely weak in her mind, head, arms, and legs. "I'm dragging...it's like my head feels heavy and my legs do, too. I just want to keep my eyes closed," she said. She complained of a frontal headache with the contractions that felt "like a vise or a tight band squeezing" her temples. She had been having some diarrhea, yet she wasn't feeling thirsty at all. The remedy *Gelsemium* is useful for people who feel weak and emotionally or physically prostrated after exciting or sad news. It is also indicated for false labor pains, lack

of thirst, and diarrhea from excitement, grief, or anticipation. People needing *Gelsemium* often feel a heaviness in their eyes, head, and limbs. They may have pelvic pains in conjunction with head pain. Hering's *Guiding Symptoms* describes these headaches as centered in the temples and forehead with "pain as from a tape around the head."

I asked Bethany to take *Gelsemium* 200c daily. She felt a bit better within a few days and significantly better over the next week or two. The contractions lessened, and she became stronger and less shaky. We kept in touch, and I increased the potency of *Gelsemium* twice when her improvements seemed to plateau. Thankfully, Bethany was able to carry the baby another month and a half until, at 38 weeks, she was happy to deliver a beautiful, healthy baby girl.

As we see in Bethany's story, homeopathy is not only good for morning sickness; it also can prove invaluable for several other challenges expectant moms may face during pregnancy.

Sally: No motion, please

Sally, a mild-mannered 27-year-old, was eight weeks pregnant when she came to me (Dr. Natalie Ham) seeking relief from the constant nausea and frequent vomiting that had been plaguing her for the past four weeks. It was even preventing her from sleeping at night, because every time she moved in bed, she'd feel more nauseated. The slightest motion could lead to severe vomiting with retching, which she would do all morning.

Sally was also extremely dizzy, especially whenever she stood up or moved suddenly. This made it hard for her to do much of anything, and she had been forced to take a leave of absence from work. "It's awful!" she moaned. "All I can do is stay perfectly still in bed all day because moving makes me nauseous, and standing makes me dizzy." Sally was desperate to feel better. She considered taking the conventional anti-nausea drugs that her doctor had offered, but she hated the idea of taking anything that might risk her baby's health. A friend had suggested

she try homeopathy, which is how she came to see me.

Sally would feel especially chilled after she vomited, but overall, she felt more bothered by warmth than she normally did. As for her mood, she confided, "I'm usually pretty personable and I like to be around people, but not now! When people try to talk to me...ugh, it just feels like such a bother."

How's your head?

The remedy that I was considering for Sally has headaches as one of its strong indications, so I asked if she had experienced any headaches since this started. "Oh, yes, everything else felt so bad, I almost forgot," she answered. "It's a dull headache and nearly always there to some degree." And like all her other symptoms, it was worse with any kind of motion; it was only relieved if she sat perfectly still, pressing down hard on the areas that hurt. Additionally, she was very thirsty, with dry, peeling lips and a dry mouth.

All these symptoms pointed to the remedy *Bryonia*. The strongest indication for *Bryonia* is feeling worse from the slightest motion—which was certainly true for Sally! People who need this remedy also usually feel worse in warm temperatures, and their headaches feel better when they apply hard pressure. They tend to be thirsty with a dry mouth and feel irritable and easily bothered. So I asked Sally to take *Bryonia* 200c, three times a day, and to check in with me in 24 hours.

The next day, Sally reported that her dizziness and vertigo were still present, but the nausea and vomiting were drastically decreased. Her headache was also completely gone. The day after that, her dizziness started to improve as well. By the end of the week, her symptoms were almost completely resolved. Sally was ecstatic to be feeling better—and without having had to risk taking conventional drugs either.

I called Sally one month later to make sure she was still doing okay. "I'm feeling great! Haven't needed to take the remedy in two weeks," she reported. Sally went on to have a pleasantly uneventful pregnancy, and a healthy baby.

For morning sickness and more

Homeopathy is perfect for pregnant women who are experiencing the often considerable discomfort of morning sickness because it is safe, effective, and does not risk the health of the unborn baby. In addition, experienced homeopaths successfully treat many other problems that can occur during pregnancy, labor, and delivery, including heartburn, constipation, mood swings, backache, and pre-term labor. So if you, your friends, or your family members will be having a baby anytime soon, be sure to let them know about homeopathy—it's the natural choice!

A Note About Dose & Potency

For severe acute complaints, we tend to use high potencies like 200c or higher in repeated doses. If there is no relief in a short period of time, we typically select a different remedy. In more chronic cases, we often start with a low potency like 6c or 30c every day, and expect slow, steady improvement over a longer course of treatment. When improvement plateaus, we tend to increase the potency—as long as the symptoms have not changed substantially. We thank Stephen Messer, ND, DHANP, of the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, for introducing us to this posology method, which is rooted in the work of Samuel Hahnemann (Organon of Medicine, 6th edition, especially paragraph 246, footnote a), Francisco Eizayaga (Treatise on Homeopathic Medicine), and Douglas M. Borland (Pneumonias).

It was the actual movement and exertion that helped her feel better.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jamie Oskin, ND, Natalie Ham, ND, and Laurinda Kwan, ND, practice at Arizona Natural Health Center in Tempe, Arizona. They are naturopathic physicians who graduated from the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine and have a special focus in homeopathy. They can be reached at 480-456-0402, or find out more at www.AzNaturalHealth.com.

