

### **OTC Medications for Heartburn and other remedies**

Heartburn, or pyrosis, is common in pregnancy due to the hormones of pregnancy that relax the esophagus and the pyloric sphincter allowing stomach acid to back up into the esophagus. In addition to this, as the baby grows it puts more pressure on the stomach and leaves less space, allowing this back up to occur more easily and frequently, even with smaller meals. The increase of bodily fluids like saliva in pregnancy doesn't help either. Some non-pharmaceutical methods for relieving heartburn include remaining upright after meals, avoiding drinking with meals, eating smaller more frequent meals, papaya enzyme, and apple cider vinegar.

If these do not provide relief, antacids such as Tums (calcium carbonate) or Mylanta (magnesium and aluminum) may bring relief. Antacids neutralize the stomach acid and increase gastric pH. Dosage: Tums- 1-2 tablets (500-750mg each) every 2 hrs as needed, not to exceed 7000mg or 6 doses in 24 hrs. Mylanta-40-125mg after meals and at bedtime not to exceed 500mg/day. Possible side effects for Tums include constipation, vomiting, dry mouth, frequent urination, muscle twitching, hypercalcemia, and hypophosphatemia. Mylanta side effect include: hypermagnesemia, aluminum intoxication, constipation, diarrhea, osteomalacia. Although both are generally considered safe in pregnancy and for breastfeeding, I would recommend Tums over Mylanta due to the aluminum in Mylanta. However, for both it is really important not to exceed maximum dosages. Monitor for signs of hypercalcemia such as sudden onset or increased N/V, thirst, anorexia severe constipation, paralytic ileus and bradycardia. Refer immediately.

- Chew a few pieces of diced papaya before meals or take papaya tablets or drink papaya juice or take papaya enzyme
- Try eating yogurt before going to bed at night, if that's when heartburn is worst for you.
- Eat raw celery
- Eat raw apples. green apples, just nibble on them whenever you get it.
- Chew raw cashews or raw almonds until they are a paste in the mouth and then swallow.
- No super-spicy meals, eat small meals more frequently, bananas soothe the stomach, do not lie down after a meal but try walking or moving your body a bit.
- NOT drinking anything with meals dilutes the gastric juices so that they can't do their work of digesting as well.
- If you don't have a problem eating dairy, you might find that milk works wonders for your heartburn.

- Candied ginger or shred ginger into hot water and make a tea.
- Organic Herbal Tea for Pregnancy Heartburn from Earth Mama Angel Baby.
- The old time apple cider vinegar cure Just take a teaspoon of the stuff if you can stand it straight or put it with a little honey in a little hot water, and drink like tea. The idea behind it is that "acid stomach" may actually be an "alkaline" condition and acid like vinegar might help.
- Don't drink the majority of your daily water intake in the evening.
- One tablespoon of liquid chlorophyll to two tablespoons aloe vera juice taken 1/2 hour before meals. It can be mixed in juice or water if necessary. It usually only has to be taken twice a day.
- Another handy little remedy is a slippery elm throat lozenge available from health food stores. Slippery elm bark is safe for pregnancy and it soothes the stomach. 1/2 hour before each meal take one or two tablets of slippery elm; this will coat and protect the area that gets burned from the acidity of the stomach content.
- Marshmallow Root Tea (Loose herbs) 1 tbsp per 1 cup cool water (not hot, this is a cold infusion) Steep for 20 mins to 1 hr and/or leave overnight in the fridge. Strain and sip.