

# Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies

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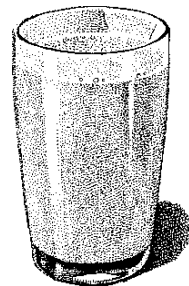
## Heartburn

What happens to cause heartburn? Heartburn, or indigestion, is a burning feeling at the top of your stomach. "Heartburn" does not actually involve the heart, but happens when food mixed with stomach acid is pushed upwards to the esophagus. Usually heartburn occurs during the final three months of pregnancy because the baby increases pressure on the digestive organs.

Try these tips:

- Eat 4 or 5 small meals instead of 2 or 3 big meals.
- Eat more slowly and chew your food thoroughly.
- Follow healthy eating and choose foods recommended from the *Food Guide Pyramid*. Avoid excess fat in your diet.
- Plan your last meal at least 2 or 3 hours before bed.
- Avoid greasy foods, heavily spiced foods, and caffeine.

- Learn to recognize foods which cause heartburn and try to avoid those foods.
- Drink liquids between meals.



- Wear loose fitting clothing.
- Take a walk after you eat.



- Don't smoke.
- Gain the amount of weight recommended by your doctor. Excess weight may increase heartburn.
- Try to reduce stress.

NOTE: Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter antacid medicines for heartburn.

### **Suggested Readings:**

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

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

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

### **References:**

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

Feeney, J. (1982). Heartburn in pregnancy. *British Medical Journal*, 284, 1138-9.

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.

Richter, J., and Castell, D. (1982). Gastroesophageal reflux. Pathogenesis, diagnosis and therapy. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 97, 93-103.



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