

<p>My back hurts!</p>	<p>I get horrible leg cramps at night!</p>	<p>I wonder if it's safe to have sex.</p>
<p>I miss eating sushi... And soft cheese... And cold cuts... And tuna...</p>	<p>I had a few drinks before I knew I was pregnant. I worry about that.</p>	<p>Some of my friends smoke. I worry that it can hurt the baby.</p>
<p>I can't sleep at night.</p>	<p>I have to pee all the time, and I get out of breath walking up the stairs.</p>	<p>My hip joints hurt (or feel loose and floppy)</p>

<p>I have heart-burn... I feel awful after I eat.</p>	<p>My boobs are so big!</p>	<p>My ankles are so swollen!!</p>
<p>I am so tired of being pregnant. I can't wait till it's over!</p>	<p>I miss my Starbucks latte!</p>	<p>I hate taking giant prenatal vitamins!</p>
<p>I worry about how big the baby is getting – is there anything I can do to slow it down?</p>	<p>My baby kicks and hiccups, and shoves. And I wonder if I'm having Braxton-Hicks.</p>	<p>Partners say: I'm feeling left out... nobody seems to notice I'm about to be a parent too.</p>

Common Complaints of Pregnancy Game

Goal. This simple activity involves the class in a discussion that covers a wide range of topics: exercise, nutrition, substances, stress, and physiological changes of pregnancy. Depending on the amount of discussion, it takes 25 – 50 minutes.

Set-Up: For a large class, hand out cards to partners only. For a small class, each person takes one.

To introduce the game, say something like “Pregnancy brings a lot of physical changes and challenges. It also brings a long list of things that you *should* do to keep you and baby healthy and a seemingly longer list of things you *shouldn’t do* anymore. By late pregnancy, it’s easy to feel frustrated and feel done with all of this! So, partners, I’m guessing that you’ve recently been hearing some of the “common complaints of pregnancy” voiced around your house! Each of these cards has one common complaint I’ll ask you to read aloud and discuss. Now, I also know that lots of you will have come up with ways to make the discomforts more manageable, and you’ve done your own research on the shoulds and shouldn’ts and may have some great insight /advice to share. I’ve also got more ideas and information about all of these topics. So, let’s go around and each person read your complaint, then we’ll talk about how to make it better...”

Content: Here is a list of all the cards. The italicized notes are things that may or may not come up in the discussion. The non-italicized are items I want to be sure to touch on.

My back hurts!

- *Take breaks from standing at work, minimize lifting*
- *Mattress? Chiropractor? Shoulder circles?*
- Demo: Good posture
- Demo/practice pelvic tilts

I get awful leg cramps at night!

- Hydration. Potassium; Balance of calcium and magnesium
- Don’t point toes
- Demo: calf stretch to release

I wonder if it’s safe to have sex.

- Yes (unless told otherwise by HCP or membranes ruptured)
- *May need to be creative in positions*
- Normal to have mild contractions after orgasm
- Address safer sex and the need for prevention of STI

I miss eating sushi. And soft cheese. And cold cuts. And tuna.

- Address basics of food safety
- Address mercury consumption, but also address benefits of Omega 3’s
- *May talk about breastfeeding, and how concern about food-borne illnesses decreases*

I had a few drinks before I knew I was pregnant. I worry about that.

- Babies are resilient – a few drinks are not likely to matter, especially in late pregnancy
- But, we know that at some level alcohol absolutely causes harm. Recommendation is avoid.
- *May talk about alcohol and breastfeeding*

Some of the people I hang out with smoke. I worry that it can hurt the baby.

- Babies are resilient, and minor exposure won’t harm them.
- BUT, significant exposure = increased LBW, preterm, higher rate of SIDS, etc.
- Minimize!

I can't sleep at night.

- *Pillows*
- *Warm milk, tea, etc.*
- *Exercise during day, but not just before bed.*
- Use this card to address **stress in pregnancy**: why it's a concern, and how we reduce it.

I have to pee all the time, and I get out of breath walking up the stairs.

- Use anatomy posters to illustrate why this is normal, and a positive sign.
- Use this card to address pelvic floor health and **teach kegels**.

My hip joints hurt (or feel loose and floppy)

- Address relaxin and how it's a good thing
- Demo squats as a means of strengthening muscles, and also address how to use in pregnancy

I have heart-burn... I feel awful after I eat.

- *Smaller meals, more often*
- *Don't drink a lot of water with meals*
- *Could use anatomy posters to demo why it happens... may get better after lightening.*

My boobs are so big!

- Address here that some women may be thinking "Hey, how come my boobs aren't big?"
- Talk about normal breast changes in pregnancy (tender nipples, darker nipples, dark veins, increased size, colostrum), reinforcing that they'll all make plenty of milk for baby

My ankles are so swollen!!

- *Drink fluids; Salt to taste*
- *Soak feet in cool water, or swim*
- *Sudden swelling can be warning sign, which we'll talk about later in class, but generally normal*

I am so tired of being pregnant. I can't wait till it's over!

- Address the benefits of waiting till baby is ready – difference between near-term and full-term

I miss my Starbucks latte!

- Better to go decaf, but minimal caffeine OK
- Use this card as a chance to address artificial sweeteners. FDA says all OK, but may be good to minimize chemicals

I hate taking giant prenatal vitamins!

- *Can get smaller ones. When changing vitamins, watch for constipation*
- Goal is balanced nutrition – vitamins may not be needed if diet healthy
- Address important elements: calcium, iron, protein
- Diet doesn't have to be perfect every day, but make as many good choices as you can

I worry about how big the baby is getting – is there anything I can do to slow it down?

- Address importance of good diet, not smoking, etc... let baby reach developmental potential...
- Reassure that they will be able to birth the baby they grow

My baby kicks and hiccups, and shoves. And I wonder if I'm having Braxton-Hicks.

- Say some people may worry baby not moving enough – talk about kick counts.
- Discuss common movement
- Describe B-H vs. true contractions – will address later

Partners say: I'm feeling left out... nobody seems to notice I'm about to be a parent too.

- **Don't hand this one out. READ THIS ONE YOURSELF AT THE END!!**
- **Validate this feeling!**
- **Let them know you value them.**