

Annex 2: Common Complaints of Pregnancy.

Complaint	What to Tell the Client	Provider Management
Constipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase your water intake (8 glasses); eat high-fiber foods, and take daily exercise. • Use mild laxatives as a last resort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel the client on diet. • Suggest mild laxatives only if the other measures have failed.
Headache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take mild pain relievers; e.g., paracetamol. Avoid aspirin. • Inform provider if pain becomes severe. She should attend the health facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine that the headache is not a <i>Danger Sign</i> (see below). • Offer paracetamol (Panadol,) 300 mg every 3-4 hours. • For severe headache or migraine, offer codeine or other related narcotic might be used. Remember: headache can be associated with hypertension.
Backache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid excessive bending, lifting, or walking without a rest period. • Rock pelvic periodically during the day for relief. • Wear supportive, low-heeled shoes. • If severe, wear a maternity girdle for additional support. • Heat or ice to back for relief, whichever is more comforting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel regarding comfort measures. Remember: the symptoms of UTI and onset of labor include backache.
Nausea and vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat small, meals frequently. Keep crackers at bedside and eat before getting out of bed. Eat fruit or drink fruit juice before going to sleep. • Avoid oily, spicy foods. • Get out of bed slowly. • Symptoms should not extend beyond the first three months; if severe and persistent, see your health care provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel about comfort measures. • Provide Vitamin B6, 50 mg, twice daily. • If symptoms are severe, refer for possible hospitalization and intravenous fluids. Medications for management may include: promethazine (Phenergan) -Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) -Other antihistamines • Birth defects have not been associated with the use of these drugs.
Varicosities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate legs periodically during the day. • Wear support hose (elevate legs before putting on hose for maximum support). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribe support hose, as necessary. • Refer if varicosities are severe and painful.
Vaginal discharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanse genitalia daily. Wear cotton underwear. • Use light sanitary pads if discharge is heavy. • Avoid vaginal douching. • If discharge develops with itching, irritation or unpleasant odor, see the provider as soon as possible for treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not infection, counsel for genital hygiene. • With symptoms of infection, treat according to guidelines or refer for treatment.
Leg cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During cramping, straighten leg slowly with the heel pointing and the toes upward or push the heel of the foot against the footboard of the bed or floor, if standing. • Exercise daily to enhance circulation. • Elevate legs periodically throughout the day. • Take calcium tablets daily. Eat calcium rich foods such as dairy and dark green leafy vegetables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribe calcium carbonate or calcium lactate tablets.