

**VALLEY WOMEN'S CLINIC, PLLC**

17722 Talbot Road South  
Renton, WA 98055-5744  
Appointments: 425-228-0722  
Fax: 425-271-2566  
[www.valleywomens.com](http://www.valleywomens.com)

**Trouble Sleeping During Pregnancy**

Problems falling and staying asleep (insomnia) are very common during pregnancy, especially during the third trimester. There are many causes of insomnia and several approaches you might take to help you sleep more.

**What causes insomnia during pregnancy?**

Insomnia during pregnancy may be caused by:

- hormonal changes in your body
- the need to go to the bathroom more often because your uterus is getting bigger and putting pressure on your bladder
- difficulty finding a comfortable position in bed
- an active baby (a small jabbing fist or foot can keep you awake)
- the excitement and anticipation of birth that makes it hard to relax your mind as well as your body
- frequent and sometimes frightening dreams about labor and the baby
- the feeling that you can't breathe when you lie down if the baby is pressing on your lungs.

**How can I help myself get some sleep?**

- Try any of the following measures that you think might help:
- Exercise regularly during the day.
- Drink a warm, non caffeinated, nonalcoholic drink at bedtime.
- Take a warm (not hot) bath at bedtime.
- Read before you try to go to sleep.
- Ask your partner to help you relax by giving you a back, neck, or shoulder rub with a soothing lotion.
- Use the muscle relaxation techniques taught in childbirth classes.
- Listen to some soothing music or nature sounds in bed.
- Lie on your left side with one pillow supporting your abdomen and another between your legs.

If necessary, you might have to lie down for short periods of rest or sleep during the day to make up for your loss of sleep during the night.

**Is there anything my doctor can do to help?**

If your lack of sleep becomes such a problem that your mental and physical health are suffering, tell your doctor. He or she may prescribe one of the sedatives that can be taken safely during pregnancy.

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