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## EXCESSIVE DAYTIME SLEEPINESS IN PREGNANCY

### What is excessive daytime sleepiness?

Excessive daytime sleepiness is beyond and sometimes different than the sensation of feeling tired. When nine hours of sleep per night is not enough or the sleepiness affects day-to-day activities, this is viewed as abnormally high levels of sleepiness, known as “excessive daytime sleepiness”.



### Does pregnancy cause or worsen excessive daytime sleepiness?

- During pregnancy there are many physical and hormonal changes and psychological factors that can affect night sleep duration and quality, making night sleep less restorative, and increasing sleepiness during the day
- Higher progesterone levels and  $\beta$ -HCG in the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester can cause people to feel sleepier during the day. This usually improves in the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester, and can worsen again in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester when physical changes impact nighttime sleep



### How can excessive daytime sleepiness be managed during pregnancy?

If daytime sleepiness is impacting the day-to-day activities or causing safety issues (such as sleepiness while driving), it is important to talk to a healthcare provider to see if there are other factors or conditions causing it. Some ways to help manage excessive daytime sleepiness include:

- Increasing the duration of night sleep. Sleeping an extra 30-60 minutes can sometimes help substantially
- Adding a planned nap in the early afternoon can also help. Preferably the nap should be no more than 30-40 minutes and not too late in the day, so it does not disrupt nighttime sleep
- Maintaining energy levels by staying well hydrated, getting regular exercise, and eating regularly
- Having a glass of water or getting outside for a short walk when feeling sleepy during the day
- Improving the quality of night sleep. See our [Sleep during pregnancy health topic](#) and [infographic](#) for more tips

For more information visit <https://firstexposure.ca/excessive-daytime-sleepiness-in-pregnancy/> or scan the QR code.



**This information does not replace the medical care and advice from your healthcare provider. Please contact your healthcare provider for any questions you may have.**

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