

## **Herbal Options for Common Discomforts of Pregnancy**

Kari Radoff and Cynthia Belew, 2009

### **Anemia:**

- 1) Floradix Iron and Herbs
- 2) Nettle leaf infusion
- 3) Yellow dock tincture 2 droppersful BID

#### **Iron-Up Tonic**

½ cup Yellow Dock root  
¼ cup Alfalfa leaf  
¼ cup Nettles leaf  
Organic Black Strap Molasses

Simmer all of the herbs for ½ an hour in 1 pint of water. Strain out the herbs and return the tea back to the sauce pan. Bring to a boil once again and reduce the decoction to a total of 8oz. Add 8oz iron rich Molasses to the tea to create a syrup. Mix and pour into a glass jar. Dosage is 2 Tablespoons 1-2xdaily. Store in the refrigerator for up to 6 weeks. (Kari's recipe)

### **Constipation**

Dried plums, eat 5-6 a day

Prune juice

Yellow dock tincture or Yellow dock and Dandelion root syrup (also high in Fe, traditional remedy for constipation and anemia)

#### **Laxative syrup**

½ ounce dried Dandelion root  
½ ounce dried Yellow Dock Root

Simmer both herbs in 4 cups of water, gently, uncovered, until reduced to one cup. Strain the liquid and discard the herb material. Add ½ cup blackstrap molasses, mixing well until blended. Cool to room temperature. Keep refrigerated. It will keep for up to two weeks in the refrigerator. Take 1-2 Tablespoons, up to twice daily

### **Depression / risk of postpartum depression**

1. Saint John's Wort tincture 1-2 droppersful, diluted 2-3 times daily
2. Fish oil, bare minimum of 1000 mg/day, 2000-3000 mg better.

## **Edema**

1. Infusion of dandelion leaf as a gentle diuretic to offload extra fluid
2. Nettle infusion is also diuretic
3. Cleavers tincture 60-90 drops 3x daily to promote lymphatic drainage and reduce third spacing
4. Massage with diluted stimulating essential oils such as peppermint, orange, or rosemary

## **Gastritis**

1. Meadowsweet and Marshmallow root infusion
2. Strong Chamomile tea

## **Gas/bloating**

1. Strong tea of chamomile (manzanilla) and/or Linden (Tila), Fennel seed
2. Tincture of above 1-2 droppersful, diluted TID

## **Heartburn**

1. Slippery Elm:
  - a. lozenges, 2-4 at a time, up to 12 per day
  - b. powder, 1-2 teaspoons stirred in with oatmeal or applesauce
2. Slowly chew raw almonds. 8-10 at a time
3. Marshmallow root infusion or syrups
4. Marshmallow root and Meadowsweet infusion
5. If they are prone to heartburn when not pregnant use 5-10 drops of bitters 5 minutes prior to large meals to promote adequate breakdown and absorption of food as well as have secretion of digestive acids while food is in the stomach ready to be broken down

## **Hemorrhoids**

1. Treat constipation with above recommendations
2. Witch hazel topical astringent or sitz bath with Witch Hazel, Calendula, Yarrow
3. Topical application (compress) of a black tea teabag (astringent) or a chamomile tea teabag (anti-inflammatory): teabag soaked in hot water for a minute or so, cooled and applied. (careful- black tea will stain fabric)
4. Horse Chestnut seed tincture – 30 dropps, diluted, TID - lot of research – equal to compression stockings in efficacy.

5. Nettle leaf infusion – venotonic actions.
6. Food sources of rutin: apricots, cherries, grapes, grapefruit, plums and oranges
  - a. Or Rutin supplements 300 mg TID, effective in RCTs. Safety after 28 weeks has been confirmed in two human trials.

### **Insomnia**

1. Skullcap, Passionflower and/or Valerian tinctures or tea
  - a. Tincture 1-2 droppersful of each TID or PRN, or combined herbs 2-3 droppersful TID or PRN
2. Mandarin essential oil placed on the bottoms of the feet
3. Eat a high protein whey shake prior to bed (to reduce N/V and prevent waking due to dips in blood sugar)
4. Strong chamomile tea
5. Strong Lemon Balm tea
6. Inhalation of lavender essential oil

### **Leg Cramps**

1. Nutritive rich herbal tea (nettles, raspberry, oatstraw, etc.)
2. Magnesium supplement 1000mg/day

### **Nausea/Vomiting**

Can use any of the following remedies alone or in combination with each other.

1. Ginger:
  - a. tea sipped throughout day, alone or mixed with peppermint tea
  - b. ginger candies,
  - c. ginger tincture 10-15 drops, diluted, PRN
  - d. ginger capsules 250-500 mg TID
  - e. Reed's Ginger Ale (must be Reeds, most ginger ale does not contain real ginger)
2. Peppermint tea in small sips throughout the day
3. Dandelion root tincture 10-15 drops 3xdaily along with pregnancy tea and B6 (10-25 mg TID-QID)
4. Raspberry, nettles, nutritive tea (Pregnancy tea)
5. Peppermint essential oil (saturate a small piece of cotton with it and put in a small vial to carry, open and sniff as needed – do not use essential oil internally)
6. Tinctures or tea of Anise or Fennel, Chamomile, Meadowsweet, Ginger, Black Horehound (mix all and take 10 drops prn, as frequently as needed-formula from Mary Bove)

### **Sciatica**

1. St. Johns Wort oil topically BID or PRN
2. Malic Acid/Magnesium supplement (we used a supplement that was 600mg Malic Acid w/ 150mg Mg in 2 tablets...take 4-6 tablets/day)

**Varicosities: see hemorrhoids**

## **PUPPS**

Topical:

- Chamomile topical cream (patch test first to check for contact dermatitis)
- Saint John's Wort oil, topically
- Aloe Vera gel, topically
- Witch hazel extract, applied as a compress
- Baking soda paste

Internal: Nettle leaf infusion may have skin anti-inflammatory properties

## **Upper Respiratory Infection**

Echinacea tea, or tincture

- minimum effective dose 2 droppersful BID, better dose is 2 droppersful 4-5x daily for a few days, to reduce duration and severity of cold symptoms

Ginger, Garlic

## **Breastfeeding:**

### **Galactagogue**

1. Fennel & Fenugreek, I would use this mostly in tea...increase the daily fluid intake and stimulate breastmilk production
2. or fenugreek capsules (Cynthia) TID
3. HerbPharm's Mothers Lactation Tonic