

My Mum is having a baby!

Why is she so sick?



A child's guide to Hyperemesis Gravidarum

Dedicated to Nadine

Thank you to Nadine,
a Hyperemesis Gravidarum Warrior, and her son
Madden for sharing his questions.



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Henrietta the HG Hippo

Hello! My Name is Henrietta.

I am the Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG) Hippo, I like to help by answering questions about HG.

Your mum is having a baby, but she is feeling really sick and that can be scary and confusing.

Let me answer some of your questions.



Mum is having a baby

So you're going to be a big brother or sister.

Your mum is having a baby.

You might be excited, nervous, happy, angry, sad or a little bit scared.

All those feelings are normal and it's ok to feel this way.



Mum doesn't feel well, is she going to be OK?

Lots of mums feel unwell when they are growing a baby.

This is normal.

They might feel tired, sick and need to vomit.

Most mums will still be able to do most things and they will start to feel better as the baby grows.

But some mums, like yours, have HG.

They have a harder time and need some help from Doctors, Midwives and Aboriginal Health workers.



People say Mum is sick. What is she sick with?



Severe Nausea and vomiting, which is called Hyperemesis Gravidarum, means your mum feels very sick.

Hyperemesis Gravidarum is hard to say so we call it HG.

She probably feels tired all the time and has trouble getting up.

She can't play with you like she used to even though she really wants to.

Mum might feel like this until the baby comes, so she needs some help from the Doctors, Midwives, Nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers.

Lots of questions

When your Mum is sick it's OK to have lots of questions.

That's what Henrietta is for!

My friend Madden is brave like you and shared his questions from when his Mum was sick with HG, in the hopes that it might help other children.

Let's keep reading to hear Madden's questions.



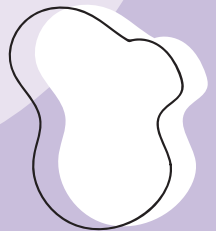
Why can't you play with me like you used to anymore?

Your Mum loves playing with you and she can't wait to be able to again. But at the moment Mum feels so sick that she has trouble getting out of bed.

Even though your Mum can't play much or take care of you like she used to, please know it's not your fault and you didn't do anything wrong.

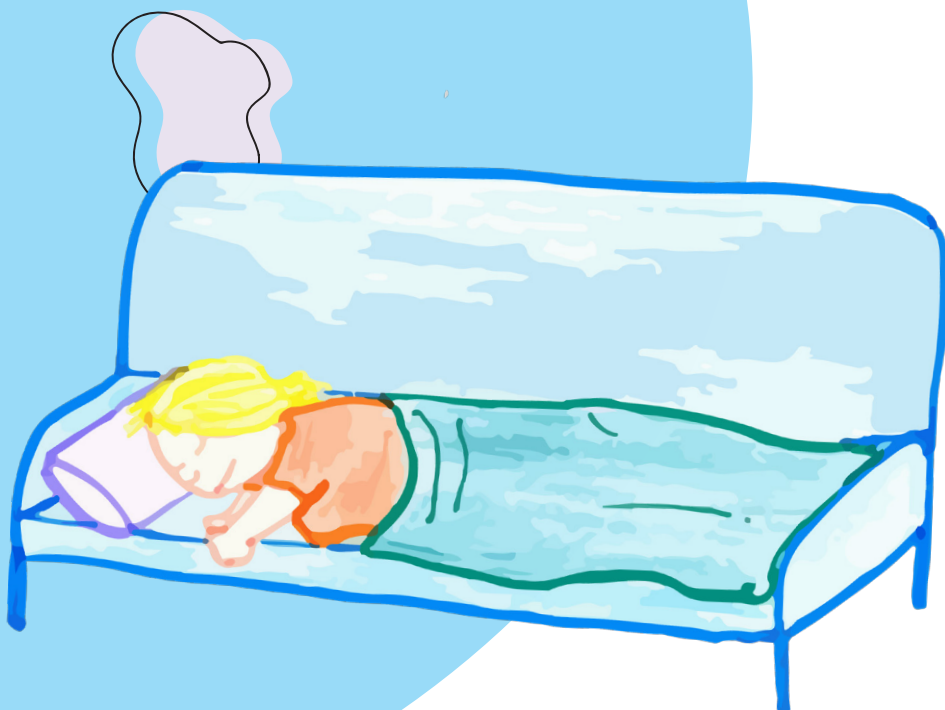
HG makes her feel so sick it's hard to do anything else. She loves you very much and can't wait until she can be there for you like before.

HG won't last forever, but it might feel like a really long time. When Mum feels better you will get to have fun together again.





**Mum, why are you in bed
all the time?**



Have you ever spun around in a circle or played on spinning equipment at the park?

Did it make you feel dizzy and want to lie down?

That's what Mum feels like all the time.

She is very tired and her head won't stop spinning and making her dizzy.

Mum needs to get lots of quiet rest to try and help her feel better.



**Mum, why are you always in
the bathroom?**





Mum is very sick.

Even if she lies down and tries to get some rest, she may still need to vomit from time to time.

Mum might spend a lot of time in the bathroom because it's easier for her to go to the toilet.

It can be hard for you to see Mum so sick, and it's OK to feel upset.

You could try talking to some adults you trust about your feelings.



Is it OK that mum sees a lot of Doctors and Nurses?

Your Mum will see a Midwife or Doctor for check-ups as the baby grows.

Your Mum might have some extra appointments because of HG.

The Doctors and Nurses might need to do tests and check how much water Mum is drinking to make sure she is OK.

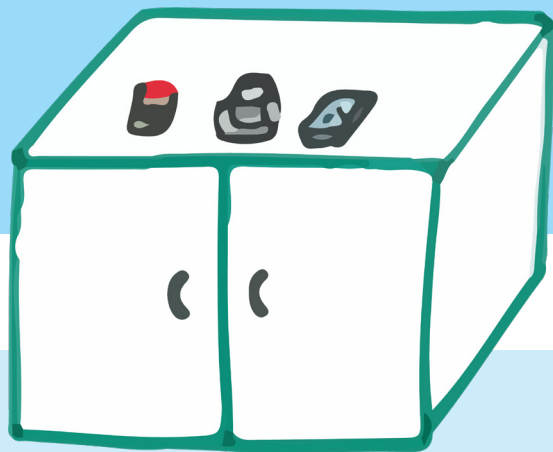
They might need to give her some extra water through a special tube.



Mum, what's that?

When your Mum has HG, the Doctor might give her some medicine to help. The Doctor is doing their best to help Mum feel better.

It is very important that you never touch Mum's medication, it's just for her.



Mum why do you have to go to hospital again?

If Mum can't drink enough water or eat food because she feels sick, she might need to go to the hospital.

At the hospital the Doctors might put some tubes in Mum to help her eat and drink.



Can I come?

It's hard to watch Mum be sick and you want to be with her all the time.

If your Mum has to go to hospital, you might be able to visit but you won't be able to stay overnight.

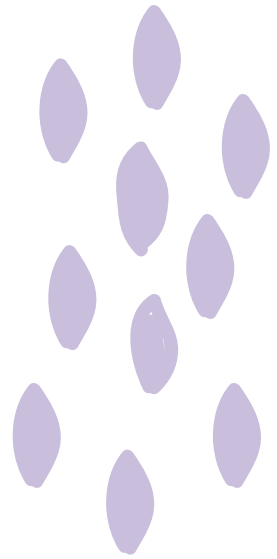


Will mum ever feel better?

Sometimes Mum might have a good day where she feels a little bit better and you can do a few more things with her, but she still needs to make sure she gets rest.



HG is different for all mums, some might only be sick for a little while and some can be sick all the way until the baby arrives.



What can I do to help?

It's not your job to look after the grown ups in your life but there are lots of little things you can do to help:

- Next time your Mum doesn't feel well, maybe you can bring her a pillow and can lie down for a rest together.
- You might be able to bring Mum some water or a little snack if she wants.
- Play quietly to help Mum get some rest.
- Make Mum a card or some drawings.

Sometimes this feels scary, who can help me?

You can talk to another person in your family or a trusted adult like a Teacher, Doctor, Nurse, Midwife or Aboriginal Health Worker.

You can also talk to someone from Kids Helpline, either over the phone or on the website listed below:

Kids Helpline:
1800 55 1800

kidshelpline.com.au/kids



For Parents

Congratulations on your pregnancy, and sincerest empathy as you embark on this journey with Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG).

HG can be difficult for adults and health professionals to understand, let alone children.

This resource was made with the help of one of our health district's HG warriors who wished for a way to explain HG to her other child.

We hope this booklet will help provide an opportunity for your child to better understand what is happening, and to ask questions and voice their fears in a safe place.

Further resources



ISLHD Maternity Services website:

isldh.health.nsw.gov.au/services-clinics/welcome-division-maternity-and-womens-health/nausea-and-vomiting-pregnancy-nvp

Need an interpreter?

Professional interpreters are available if you need help to communicate in English, or if you are Deaf. Our staff can also ask for an interpreter.

The staff will book an interpreter for you. Interpreter Services are free and confidential.

You can bring a family member or friend with you to the appointment. If you need help to communicate, it should be through a professional interpreter.

You can also call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 if you need to speak to us before your appointment.

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