



THERE'S A REASON FOR THAT ODD PREGNANCY SYMPTOM

Many weird things are normal (and fixable).

● METALLIC TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH

Blame the uptick of estrogen and progesterone for this. Chewing gum, eating salty or spicy foods, and drinking cooler beverages can help.

● VIVID DREAMS

Hormones like progesterone and lack of sleep can raise anxiety, which may lead to bizarre dreams. Try to go to bed earlier, or meditate before drifting off to calm your nerves.

● BLEEDING GUMS

Hormonal changes can make your gums more vulnerable to plaque buildup, leading to inflammation and bleeding when you brush. Pregnant people are more susceptible to gingivitis and tooth decay, so stay on top of good oral-care habits—brushing twice a day and flossing. (You don't need to up your brushing; this could lead to more bleeding.)

● DROOLING

Excessive salivation is a side effect of nausea. Lozenges, gum, sips of water, or over-the-counter anti-nausea meds can help. But don't worry; this typically levels out by your second trimester. (Hang in there!)

Sources: *Parents* advisor Marta Perez, M.D., an ob-gyn in St. Louis; *Parents* advisor Laura Riley, M.D., an ob-gyn in New York City; Natasha Spencer, M.D., an ob-gyn in Altamonte Springs, Florida.

Why Do My Eyes Itch?

Red. Scratchy. Watery. If any of these symptoms sound familiar, here are a few potential explanations for why your eyes are acting up.



Your screen might not be the only thing to blame for your blurry vision.

which can cause even more redness after prolonged use," Dr. Esparaz says.

There's something in there.

A rogue eyelash, some sweater fuzz, or a dust particle can feel annoying and painful. "Avoid rubbing your eyes excessively as that could cause a corneal abrasion," Dr. Esparaz says. "Instead, flush your eyes with eye drops." If the discomfort persists, see your eye doctor.

You don't blink enough.

Sounds strange, but your blink rate can decrease by up to seven times when you're using a digital device, and this dries out your eyes, Dr. Esparaz notes. Practice the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, focus on something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.

You need glasses.

If you squint to bring objects into focus or get frequent headaches, it may be time for a prescription, so schedule an eye exam. "As we reach our 40s, we start to develop presbyopia, a condition that makes it harder to read up close," Dr. Esparaz explains. "I always recommend a complete dilated-eye exam at least once in your 30s or 40s to ensure good ocular health."

You have seasonal allergies.

Grass or weed pollen are common culprits. First, see your eye doctor to make sure allergies really are the cause, says Elizabeth Shanika Esparaz, M.D., an ophthalmologist in Stow, Ohio. Then apply cool compresses to your eyes, use saline drops, and take an over-the-counter oral antihistamine to soothe symptoms.

Your makeup is old.

Next time you go shopping, consider picking up a new tube of mascara. When you apply makeup, the natural microbes that live on your

lashes and lids contaminate the products. Continuously reusing these items reintroduces old microbes, which can cause inflammation in your eyelids, Dr. Esparaz explains. Wash your makeup brushes every week or two, and replace your eye makeup (eyeliner, eyeshadow, mascara) every three months.

They're dry.

The simplest explanation also has a simple fix: Make sure you're drinking plenty of water. Over-the-counter artificial-tear eye drops, gel, or ointment can help too. "Avoid anything that says 'get the red out' or has the ingredient tetrahydrozoline,

FROM LEFT: JOSE LUIS PELAEZ INC./GETTY; CHARDAY PENN/GETTY.