

# Wrist Bands Control Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

## The Efficacy of SeaBands for the Control of Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

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**Purpose of Study:** To investigate the effectiveness of wrist bands (SeaBands) in controlling nausea and vomiting in pregnancy (NVP).

**Materials & Methods:** A group of 27 women who were from 5 to 22 weeks pregnant were included in the study. Of these, 17 were multiparous, and 12 of these 17 had had NVP before. A structured interview was conducted to establish history and current pattern of NVP, a Rhodes Index of Nausea and Vomiting (INV) Form 2 was filled out, and an exit interview was then conducted after the experience of wearing SeaBands. The INV survey measures the perceived duration, frequency, and intensity of distress caused by nausea, vomiting and retching. SeaBands (1-in-wide, elasticized, soft cloth circular bands with a button on the underside) were worn for 7 days, and follow-up INV measurements were done by telephone on days 2 and 5, while a final telephone interview on day 7 included both INV measurements and the posttest interview. The mechanism of action is presumed to be the even pressure exerted by the wrist band button on the pericardial meridian, which corresponds to the Neiguan (P6) point in Chinese traditional medicine, and is thought to control heart function and breathing. Bilateral pressure on this point in the wrists is believed to restore the balance of the fundamental life forces, yin and yang.

**Results:** Interview data indicated relief from NVP through use of the SeaBands. Patients who applied the SeaBands as soon as the nausea began (31 patients) experienced complete elimination of symptoms, while 60% of women reported palliation, and 9% had little relief from symptoms. Anecdotal reports indicated that correct positioning of the bands was critical for re-

lief from symptoms, as was wearing of the bands on both wrists and application first on the right and then on the left wrists.

**Conclusion:** This study shows that the use of SeaBands, although not effective in all pregnant women, has the potential to alleviate NVP. Nausea is a distressing and disabling symptom and NVP is a prevalent symptom that generates a sense of loss of control in pregnant women. Furthermore, prolonged and severe NVP can lead to nutritional deficits, dehydration, and electrolyte imbalance. The possibility of reducing NVP through nonpharmacologic means is important. Future studies using larger samples and control groups should be undertaken to demonstrate the effect of this noninvasive, nonpharmacologic method of reducing NVP.

## SELECTED REFERENCES

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## CLINICAL CONCLUSION

**N**ausea and vomiting affect a significant proportion of pregnant women and cause varying amounts of disability. A noninvasive, nonpharmacologic effective treatment would be a great benefit to these patients. SeaBands are elasticized wrist bands with a plastic button on the underside. They exert pressure on the Neiguan (P6) point, which according to Chinese traditional doctors rebalances energy. The bands are more effective if they are applied early. While the SeaBands were not effective in all women, many found symptom relief with their use. In an effort to avoid use of pharmaceutical products, SeaBands may be worth a try. —Shannon E. Perry, RN, PhD.