

# Chili powder is spicing up one woman's pregnancy

The chili powder container is upside down and shakin' at the Tracy household in Abingdon. Kendall Tracy, 26, has been adding the spice to mostly everything she cooks and eats lately.

"I normally hate spicy foods," said the 26-year-old parishioner of St. Mark, Fallston. Yet in her second pregnancy at seven months, Mrs. Tracy can't get enough spice to satisfy her taste buds. "When I make chili, it's very hot. I'm putting chili powder on most of my food. I can't explain it."

During her first trimester, she added raw onions – which she hates – on sandwiches, which she craved. Her husband, Scott Tracy, made six at a time to last her through a day of bedrest. And during her first pregnancy, the craving was for green olives.

"I ate an entire jar one night," said the financial analyst at Good Samaritan Hospital, Baltimore.

Mrs. Tracy hasn't mentioned the cravings to her obstetrician, but if she did, she might learn that although one of the oldest pregnancy-related myths is that mothers-to-be crave pickles and ice cream, there are some days certain foods are craved.

Information on Good Samaritan's online health encyclopedia says the specific reason for cravings is not known, although it is believed to be related to the many pregnancy hormones circulating in a woman's system.

Often it passes after the first three months, as in the case of Mrs. Tracy's hankering for onions, which she no longer craves with two months of pregnancy to go.

"As long as you make sure you are eating all the important nutrients needed for you and your baby," reads the report, "indulging in some of your cravings every now and then will likely be fine."

It goes on to say that women sometimes will have cravings for non-food items during

pregnancy, such as dirt, clay or laundry detergent – a condition called pica – thought to be an iron deficiency. It is important to contact your obstetrician immediately should this occur.