

Medications in Pregnancy

While some medications are considered safe to take during pregnancy, some medications are not safe, or their effects are unknown. It is important to be aware of the safe use of medications in pregnancy, particularly during the first trimester which is an important period of development for your baby.

We recommend the following guidelines for medication use in pregnancy:

- Check with your health care provider about prescription medications, vitamins, herbal remedies, and supplements and inform them of your pregnancy.
- Most herbal preparations and supplements have not been proven to be safe during pregnancy.
- Be aware that most medications will cross the placenta.
- Most medications for your mood are generally safe in pregnancy - the benefit of maternal mental health outweighs the risk of the medication in pregnancy.
 - Most SSRIs/SNRIs are safe. Avoid Paxil, lithium, valproic acid and carbamazepine.
- Most antibiotics are safe in pregnancy with the exception of doxycycline and ciprofloxacin.
- Do not take any over-the-counter medication unless it is necessary.
- **Do not take Aspirin (unless instructed), Motrin (ibuprofen) or Aleve (naproxen) during pregnancy.**

Prenatal Vitamins

- Prenatal Vitamins are available without a prescription and are safe to take during pregnancy. We recommend finding a prenatal vitamin with at least 400mcg of Folic Acid (**starting one month prior to pregnancy and throughout pregnancy**)

Avoid in Pregnancy

Avoid these herbal supplements and cosmetic products:
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Arbor vitae	Cinchona	Meadow saffron	Tansy
Beth root	Cottonroot bark	Pennyroyal	White peony
Black cohosh	Feverfew	Poke root	Wormwood
Blue cohosh	Ginseng	Rue	Yarrow
Cascara	Golden seal	Sage	Yellow dock
Chaste tree berry	Juniper	St. John's wort	Vitamin A (large doses can cause birth defects)
Chinese angelica (Dong Quai)	Kava kava	Senna	
	Licorice	Slippery Root	

Avoid these ingredients in topical (skin) products:
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Retinol	Tretinoin	Adapalene	Tazarotene
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Avoid these aromatherapy essential oils:

Calamus Mugwort Pennyroyal Sage Wintergreen Basil Hyssop Myrrh Marjoram Thyme

Safe Medications by Condition in Pregnancy

The following medications and home remedies have no known harmful effects during pregnancy when taken **according to the package directions**.

** Please Note: No drug can be considered 100% safe to use during pregnancy. Check with your pharmacist or healthcare provider before taking new medications. **

Condition	Safe Medications
Allergy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benadryl (diphenhydramine) • Claritin (loratadine) – after 1st trimester • Zyrtec (cetirizine) – after 1st trimester • Flonase (fluticasone, nasal) • Allegra (fexofenadine)
Cough, Cold and Flu	<p>Do not take "SA" (sustained action) forms of these drugs or the "Multi-Symptom" forms of these drugs. Choose alcohol free formulations as available.</p> <p>Avoid Nyquil (phenylephrine)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm Water / Saltwater Gargle • Saline Nasal Drops or Spray, neti pot • Vicks vapor rub • Tylenol (acetaminophen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not exceed 4000mg per day. • Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid in first trimester. ○ Avoid with high blood pressure. • Afrin (oxymetazoline, nasal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Short term, acute use only. ○ Avoid with high blood pressure. • Flonase (fluticasone, nasal) • Mucinex (guaifenesin) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid in first trimester. ○ Choose alcohol-free formulation. • Robitussin (dextromethorphan) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose alcohol-free formulation. • Robitussin DM (guaifenesin and dextromethorphan) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose alcohol-free formulation. • Halls Cough Drops (menthol)
Constipation	<p>Goal (to avoid constipation): 25-30g fiber and drink 12 cups of water daily</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiber Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Metamucil (psyllium) ○ Citrucel (methylcellulose)



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefiber (dextrin) ○ Fibercon (polycarbophil) • Colace (docusate) • Laxatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Miralax (Polyethylene Glycol 3350) ○ Milk of Magnesia (Magnesium Hydroxide)
Diarrhea	<p>Focus on B.R.A.T diet (bananas, rice, applesauce and toast)</p> <p>For 24 hours, only after 12 weeks of pregnancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imodium (loperamide, with or without simethicone)
First Aid Ointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bacitracin • Polysporin (bacitracin, polymyxin) • Neosporin
Headache	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tylenol (Acetaminophen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not exceed 4000mg per day.
Heartburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maalox / Mylanta (aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide, simethicone) • Tums (calcium carbonate), max of 5000mg/24 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take at least 2 hours apart from prenatal vitamin. • Gaviscon (aluminum hydroxide, magnesium carbonate) • Pepcid AC (famotidine) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only use after 12 weeks gestation
Hemorrhoids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation H cream (phenylephrine, pramoxine, glycerin, white petrolatum) • Anusol (hydrocortisone) – short-term use only • Tucks Pads (witch hazel) • Witch Hazel
Nausea and Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take 25mg tab every 6-8 hrs. Do not exceed 200mg per day, including amount in prenatal vitamins. • Unisom SleepTabs (doxylamine) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Available in 25 mg tablets: take ½ tablet (12.5 mg) morning & afternoon and take 1 tablet (25 mg) at bedtime. • Sea Bands • Emetrol (fructose, dextrose, and phosphoric acid) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not for use with diabetes • Ginger: ginger candy/gum, ginger root capsules 250 mg four times a day
Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tylenol (Acetaminophen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not exceed 4000mg per day.
Rashes	<p>All rashes in pregnancy should be evaluated by your provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benadryl cream (diphenhydramine) • Caladryl lotion or cream (pramoxine, zinc) • Calamine • Hydrocortisone cream or ointment • Clotrimazole • Oatmeal bath (Aveeno Colloidal Bath Treatment)
Yeast Infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monistat-7 (Miconazole) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 7-day treatment only in pregnancy.



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Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unisom SleepTabs (doxylamine) 12.5mg -25mg at bedtime• Benadryl (diphenhydramine) 25 mg at bedtime
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Patient Resources

[MotherToBaby.org](https://www.mothertobaby.org)

- Evidence-based information on the safety of medications and other exposures during pregnancy and while breastfeeding

Pregnancy Exposure Info Line

- 877-311-8972

Clinical References

MotherToBaby.org
Lexicomp
UpToDate
Clinical Pharmacology
American College of OBGYN (ACOG)
Epocrates