

MEDICATIONS IN PREGNANCY

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Please note: If you have questions about exposures to medications, drugs, chemicals, x-rays, infections and possible risks during pregnancy, you may call the Pregnancy/Environmental Hotline at 1-800-322-5014. Sponsored by the Genesis Fund, the Hotline is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. All calls are confidential and free of charge.

It is difficult to advise a woman about the safety of medications in pregnancy since there might be long-term drug effects of which we are unaware. In general, medications that have been around longer have been tested more thoroughly and should be preferred over newer ones. We recommend avoiding any unnecessary drug or medication during pregnancy, especially during the first 20 weeks when your baby's organ systems are forming.

It is important, however, if you have pre-existing medical problems for which you were taking medication prior to your pregnancy, that you speak with your primary doctor or obstetrician before you stop taking it. There may be serious problems for you and your baby if you do not stop taking certain medications. It is ultimately your choice if you wish to take medications for cold and flu. Each woman has to weigh the benefits versus the risks. For your convenience and consideration, listed below are a number of medications that with reasonable, necessary and sparing use, are permitted in pregnancy:

PAIN RELIEVERS Acetaminophen (Tylenol) will help headache and minor discomforts. Avoid aspirin and ibuprofen (Advil).

COLD AND FLU Sudafed or Chlortrimeton can be taken for congestion and Robitussin DM can be taken for cough suppression. If you have high blood pressure or are taking blood pressure medication, consult us before using cold preparations. If you are diabetic, please ask your pharmacist for cough syrup which does not contain sugar.

ANTIBIOTICS Penicillins and Ampicillin are permitted anytime during your pregnancy if you were not previously allergic. Sulfa drugs are allowed up until the third trimester, except in rare instances. Erythromycin is an alternative if you are allergic to penicillins.

STOOL SOFTENERS You may use Metamucil, Colace, Senokot or Milk of Magnesia.

ANTACIDS Tums are fine and a good source of calcium. You may also use Mylanta, Maalox, Gelusil, Riopan, Di-Gel, Gaviscon and Rolaids. Do not use Alka Seltzer as it contains aspirin.

SEASONAL ALLERGIES: Sudafed, Claritin, Claritin D or Benadryl.