










I AM PREGNANT

What medicines are safe?

Although most medicines are generally safe to take during pregnancy, you should not self-medicate. Consult with your practitioner or Wal-Mart pharmacist first.

Non-medicinal alternatives should always be your first step in managing your condition. One example is resting, drinking lots of fluid and using a vaporizer to control cold symptoms. Another example would be increasing dietary fibre and fluid intake and exercising for constipation.

MEDICATIONS	HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME AND MY BABY?
ALLERGY & COLD MEDICATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Antihistamines that make you sleepy are generally safe, i.e. chlorpheniramine (ChlorTripolon™), diphenhydramine (Benadryl™) For nasal congestion, try using nasal sprays for a few days, i.e. saline solution (Salinex™), xylometazoline (Otrivin™) or oral decongestants, i.e. pseudoephedrine (Sudafed™) Expectorants to reduce phlegm, i.e. guaifenesin (Robitussin plain™) and cough suppressants, i.e. dextromethorphan (Benylin DM™) are generally safe products that can be used for a short time
ANTI-NAUSEA MEDICATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check with your doctor before using Diclectin™ prescription drug has been approved by Health Canada. Dimenhydrinate (Gravol™) can be used for “breakthrough vomiting”.
ASTHMA MEDICATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most asthma medications are safe and should be used as directed by your physician
HEARTBURN MEDICATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use product that say “No Sodium” or “Sodium-Free” Calcium carbonate (Tums™, Rolaids™), aluminum hydroxide & magnesium hydroxide (Maalox™), and alginic compound (Gaviscon™) are safe products
LAXATIVES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For constipation, it is best to eat high-fibre (bran cereal) or use bulk-forming agents, i.e. psyllium (Metamucil™) Do not use stimulant laxatives Stool softeners are safe, i.e. docusate calcium (Surfak™) or docusate sodium (Colace™)
LICE MEDICATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For lice, products that contain permethrins (Nix™) or pyrethrins (R+C™) are preferred. Use as directed on package.
PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are certain instances where the use of prescription medication is necessary for the safety of both the mother and baby. Choices have to be made in identifying the safest and most effective therapy for you; treatment recommendations from your physician may vary depending on your individual circumstances. For example, diabetic mothers must continue to monitor blood sugar levels and use insulin where appropriate. Carefully chosen anticonvulsants help epileptic mothers control seizures. For infections, there are certain safe antibiotics such as penicillin, cephalosporins and erythromycin that are prescribed by your physician
PAIN KILLERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acetaminophen (Tylenol™) is safe ASA and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, i.e. ibuprofen (Advil™), naproxen (Naprosyn™) are also safe in the first 6 months but should be avoided in the late pregnancy (last 3 months) Codeine is safe for occasional use
VAGINAL CREAMS & OVULES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most vaginal creams and suppositories (Canesten™, Micatin™) are safe Apply or insert gently as directed by your doctor Do not use iodine-containing products













FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL: MOTHERISK
Pregnancy Helplines
416-813-6780 Safety/risk of drugs + chemicals
1-800-436-8477 Nausea/Vomiting
1-888-246-5840 HIV + HIV Treatment
1-877-FAS-INFO Alcohol + substance use

There are some risks with every pregnancy. **For every 100 pregnancies, 2 or 3 babies will be born with a birth defect, by chance alone.**

The brand names of products used in this table are not being endorsed but are given as examples to help you identify and recognize medications.

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What other commonly used products should I be careful around?

PRODUCTS	HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME AND MY BABY?
ALCOHOL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A safe amount is not known but an occasional drink before you knew you conceived is probably safe Avoid drinking when you know you are pregnant Excessive amounts can affect a baby's development
CAFFEINE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small amounts (3 or less cups of coffee per day) are generally safe Large amounts (more than 3 cups of coffee per day) may increase the chances of miscarriage, premature delivery and low birth weight
CIGARETTE SMOKING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No smoking is best when you are pregnant, but if you cannot quit, cut down as much as possible Smoking does not cause birth defects but increases the risk of low birth weight, miscarriage and premature delivery These risks may be reduced if you quit smoking before the 30th week of your pregnancy Second hand smoke should also be avoided
HAIR COLOURS AND PERMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional use of these products as directed, is safe Use products in well-ventilated areas
HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most products are safe for use as directed Use products in well-ventilated areas with appropriate safeguards (i.e. gloves) Do not use industrial strength products in the home If you feel sick while cleaning, stop and check with your doctor
HOUSEHOLD PAINTS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are painting, use latex (water-soluble) paints in well-ventilated areas Do not use oil-based paints If you feel sick while painting, stop and check with your doctor
INSECTICIDES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try using a mineral oil based product such as Skin-so-Soft® Read labels of products and use ones that contain less than 50% DEET, sparingly
PESTICIDES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is best to avoid if possible For home interiors (after spraying) stay out of the home 2-3 times longer than recommended by the manufacturer Ventilate the area well by opening windows after spraying If applying to lawn, do not walk on the grass for the recommended amount of time
SUGAR SUBSTITUTES OR SWEETENERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate amounts of artificial sweetening agents i.e. aspartames (NutraSweet®), saccharin (Sweet N Low®), sodium cyclamate (Sugar Twin®), sucralose (Splenda®) are safe
VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS OR COMPUTER TERMINALS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a computer is safe, at home or office They do not emit harmful radiation and are not an increased risk to you or your baby
VITAMINS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compounds containing high amounts of Vitamin A (more than 8000 IU) should be avoided The use of folic acid (at least 0.4 mg per day) is recommended while planning for and in early pregnancy to protect newborns from neural tube defects (spina bifida) All other prenatal multi-vitamins are safe
X-RAYS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure your practitioner and x-ray technician know that you are pregnant The amount of radiation from x-rays is generally very small and is not a problem Wear a lead apron over the belly

This information is presented as an educational service. It is not intended as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your physician.

Developed by the Motherisk Program in co-operation with Algoma Best Start and Wal-Mart Pharmacy.