

## MEDICATIONS IN PREGNANCY

Pregnant women are susceptible to the same types of colds and viral infections as other women, although the symptoms may be a little more severe. Fortunately, most viruses do not cause any adverse effects on the baby. Medications do not make the illness resolve faster, but can help to keep you more comfortable. It is best to first try comfort measures such as rest, fluids, warm baths and showers, and pain relievers like acetaminophen (Tylenol). No medication can be guaranteed as “absolutely safe” during pregnancy, but there has now been extensive experience with certain over-the-counter medications that are felt to be safe if your symptoms are severe. In general, herbal supplements have not been studied in pregnancy and should be avoided.

The following medications may be taken according to directions on the product labeling:

- **Allergies** – see meds for congestion. Also, loratadine (Claritin, Claritin-D), cetirizine (Zyrtec) or fexofenadine (Allegra)
- **Congestion** – Sudafed, Actifed, Chlortrimeton, Tylenol Cold, Afrin Nasal Spray, saline nasal spray
- **Constipation** – docusate stool softener (Colace), any fiber product, polyethylene glycol (MiraLax), milk of magnesia
  - Increase fluids, exercise and natural fiber in your diet
- **Cough** – any cough syrup with guaifenesin or dextromethorphan
- **Fever** – acetaminophen (Tylenol) regular or extra strength
  - Be sure to keep your temperature below 101°F and drink plenty of fluids. Call the office if you are unable to do this.
- **Headaches** – acetaminophen (Tylenol) regular or extra strength. **No ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen sodium (Aleve) or aspirin unless you’ve checked with your doctor.**
- **Heartburn** – any antacid tablet or liquid such as Tums, Rolaids, Maalox, Mylanta. Pepcid or Zantac are okay if severe symptoms persist.
- **Hemorrhoids** – Anusol, Preparation-H, Tucks, Corticaine
- **Nausea from pregnancy** – Unisom, vitamin B6 (25-50mg three times a day)
- **Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea from stomach flu** – Kaopectate, Imodium AD
  - Drink small, frequent amounts of clear liquids such as water, soda, tea, clear broth and dilute clear fruit juices. Avoid dairy products for several days. Also, **avoid Pepto Bismol.**
- **Rash/itching** – Benadryl (25-50mg every 4-6 hours), Calamine or Aveeno products, 1% hydrocortisone cream
- **Sore throat** – throat lozenges, zinc lozenges, Chloraseptic spray
- **Vaginal yeast infection** – any over the counter product
- **Vitamins** – In general, any over-the-counter prenatal vitamin is fine. We encourage you to take a prenatal vitamin that includes DHA. Check with our office before using any other vitamin, herbal products or nutritional supplements.

It is important to continue treatment for certain illnesses like asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, thyroid disease, mental illness and seizures while you are pregnant. However, sometimes it is best to change your prescription medications and it may not be safe to abruptly stop a medication. Therefore, it is important that your doctor know about any medications you are taking as soon as you know you are pregnant.

Commonly prescribed medications by other physicians that are safe to take during pregnancy include antibiotics such as amoxicillin, penicillin, erythromycin, Zithromax and Keflex. Dental x-rays should be done only if necessary and the abdomen is covered with a lead apron. **Do not use nitrous oxide or take tetracycline.**