

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINES IN PREGNANCY

Most medications today include the warning “if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, consult your healthcare provider.” However, many over-the-counter medicines have been used for many years during pregnancy. The following products have not shown evidence of harm.

Fever / Headache / Body ache: Acetaminophen (brand name Tylenol), regular or extra-strength
You should NOT use aspirin or ibuprofen on a regular basis unless directed by a health-care provider

Respiratory Infection: Cough syrup containing dextromethorphan (brand name Robitussin DM)
Saline nose drops, Flonase
Zinc lozenges (use as soon as symptoms start; allow to dissolve in mouth every 2hr x 2-3 days)
Cough drops or anesthetic throat sprays or gargles
Antihistamine like Claritin, Allegra, Benadryl or Theraflu
Chest rubs or breathing steam (see other side for some good tips)
Supplements: Echinacea, but NO goldenseal; Vitamin C (max 1000mg/day), Emergen-C
Airborne, but only a double dose of children’s product (adult product has too much vitamin A)
Homeopathic Oscillocoquinum for flu symptoms of body aches and fever
Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) – Use ONLY in 2nd -3rd trimesters; however, phenylephrine (Sudafed PE) is safe in any trimester

Indigestion: Tums or Rolaids ; also serve as a calcium supplement
Mylanta or Maalox (excessive use can cause diarrhea)
Zantac or Pepcid
Papaya enzyme or fresh papaya
Peppermint or Chamomile Tea

Constipation: Metamucil or other psyllium product
Citrucel, Fibercon or other bulking agent
Prune juice or stewed prunes (also a great iron source)
½ cup Fiber One or All-Bran cereal every day
At least two quarts of water every day
Colace (stool softener)

Nausea/Vomiting: Vitamin B6 50mg 1-3/day; this can be taken with 1/3-1/2 tab Unisom (this antihistamine, doxylamine succinate, has anti-nausea properties but may make you sleepy, so try it first at night or on a weekend.)
Ginger tea, ginger ale, ginger capsules, or a very thin slice of ginger under the tongue
Peppermint Oil aromatherapy
Sea Bands (wear over acupressure points on wrists all day) or acupuncture
Emetrol or flat coke
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar in 1 cup of water; sip throughout the day
Homeopathic ipecac 30x

Diarrhea: Kaopectate or Imodium
Pepto-Bismol may be used only in the first 20 weeks; do not exceed recommended doses
BRAT diet (bananas, white rice, applesauce, black tea); avoid dairy for at least 24 hrs
Pedialyte or Gatorade

Hemorrhoids: Preparation H or Anusol cream or suppositories
Tucks pads or cold witch hazel compresses

Yeast Infection: Monistat, Gyne-Lotrimin, etc. are safe. Seven-day treatments work best in pregnant women.

Anemia: Please start one of these supplements daily at 20 wk unless otherwise directed!
Floradix (imported herbal liquid bought in health food store); easy on digestion, but most expensive and must be refrigerated
Ferro-Sequels (contains stool softener)
Slo-Fe (time-release iron)

Omega-3 Supplement: 300-500 mg/day mercury-free fish oil such as Nordic Naturals or Carlsens, may be useful in fetal brain development.

Today's Tip: Steam Inhalation Part I – Setting Up a Steam Inhalation Tent

Steam inhalation is a wonderful way to remedy respiratory problems such as chest congestion, sinusitis, bronchitis and bronchial cough. It is easy to do and very cost-effective: simply bring a pot of water to boil on your stove, then stand over it and drape a towel over your shoulders. Be careful not to get too close to the steam, and that the towel does not touch the flame or burner on your stove. Try to breathe through your nose if you have nasal and sinus problems; if you are too stuffed up, breathe through your mouth with your lips pursed. The steam will help keep nasal passages moistened and relieve some of the aches and pains associated with respiratory problems.

Today's Tip: Steam Inhalation Part II – Using Aromatics

Once you have the steam tent set up, consider enhancing the effectiveness of steam inhalation with aromatic herbs. Some favorites are sage and eucalyptus, which can make the steam more soothing. These herbs are also antibacterial and using aromatics in this manner can help to reduce the chance of secondary bacterial infection when respiratory diseases are caused by viruses. You can add sage or eucalyptus to the boiling water by the whole leaf or as an essential oil – try a teaspoon of the oil, or a small handful of the leaves. Both are available at herb shops.

Today's Tip: Dealing with Chest Congestion?

To help relieve head and chest congestion, as well as malaise and chills, try this powerful tea: grate a one-inch piece of fresh peeled ginger root. Place it in a pot with two cups of cold water, bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer for five minutes. Add one half-teaspoon of cayenne pepper (or more or less to taste) and simmer one minute more. Remove from heat. Add two tablespoons of fresh lemon juice, honey to taste, and one or two cloves of mashed garlic. Let cool slightly and strain if desired. Then get under some warm covers and enjoy.