

## Medicine Safety During Pregnancy: What You Need to Know



### Highlights

While many medicines are safe to take during pregnancy, some may cause harm to your baby.

Before taking medicines during pregnancy, you should get advice from your doctor or pharmacist.

If you are taking a prescription medicine, your doctor may change your dose or stop your medicine while you are pregnant.

### In This Article

What You Should Know About Medicines During Pregnancy

Determining Medicine Safety While Pregnant

Managing Prescription Medicines Safely

Using Over-the-Counter Medicines

Treating Common Conditions in Pregnancy

Complementary Medicines and Pregnancy

Risks of Illicit Drug Use

Tools And Assistance

## What You Should Know About Medicines During Pregnancy

Harm your baby  
Affect your baby's growth and development  
Increase your chance of pregnancy complications

The stage of your pregnancy  
How much medicine you take  
How often you take the medicine

## **Determining Medicine Safety While Pregnant**

Checking the medicine's packaging  
Reading the medicine's consumer medicine information leaflet (CMI)

## **Managing Prescription Medicines Safely**

Asthma  
Depression  
Diabetes  
Epilepsy  
High blood pressure

Change your medicine  
Change the dose  
Stop your medicine altogether

## **Using Over-the-Counter Medicines**

### **Treating Common Conditions in Pregnancy**

#### **Cold and Flu**

Sore throat  
Cough  
Blocked or runny nose

Pholcodine or dextromethorphan for a dry cough  
An expectorant such as guaifenesin for a chesty cough

A mucolytic such as bromhexine for a chesty cough

Inhaling steam \ (taking care to avoid burns\)

Using 0.9% sodium chloride nasal medicines

Gargle salt water

Drink lemon and honey products

Use throat lozenges

Povidone-iodine

Benzydamine

### **Aches and Pains**

Muscle pain such as back pain

Headaches

Toothache

### **Allergies and Hay Fever**

Sneezing

Itchy nose and eyes

Red, watery eyes

Beclomethasone

Budesonide

### **Constipation**

Eat more foods that contain fiber, like fruit, vegetables, and whole grains

Drink plenty of water

Senna

Bisacodyl

### **Heartburn**

Avoiding spicy, rich, acidic foods

Avoiding lying down after eating

**Diarrhea**

**Thrush**

## **Complementary Medicines and Pregnancy**

Vitamins

Minerals

Herbal medicines

Aromatherapy

Homeopathy products

## **Risks of Illicit Drug Use**

Cannabis

Amphetamines

Heroin

Cocaine

## **Tools And Assistance**

Reach out to healthcare providers early, especially if you have a chronic condition or are planning pregnancy.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about any medicine you plan to take.

Ask questions if you're unsure whether something is safe during pregnancy.

Learn to read medicine labels and leaflets carefully.