**Taking Medicine During Pregnancy**

While some medications are considered safe to take during pregnancy, the effects of other medications on your unborn baby are unknown. Therefore, it is very important to pay special attention to medications you take while you are pregnant, especially during the first trimester, a crucial time of development for your baby.

If you were taking prescription medications before you became pregnant, please ask your health care provider about the safety of continuing these medications as soon as you find out that you are pregnant. With some medications, the risk of *not* taking them may be more serious than the potential risk associated with taking them. If you are prescribed any new medications, please inform your health care provider that you are pregnant.

**What Medications Are Safe to Take During Pregnancy?**  
Prenatal vitamins are safe to take during pregnancy. Ask your health care provider about the safety of taking other vitamins, herbal remedies and supplements during pregnancy. Most herbal preparations and supplements have not been proven to be safe during pregnancy. Generally, you should not take any over-the-counter medication unless it is necessary.

**Can I Take Alternative Therapies During Pregnancy?**  
Many pregnant women believe "natural" products can be safely used to relieve nausea, backache, and other annoying symptoms of pregnancy, but many of these so called natural products have not been tested for their safety and effectiveness in non pregnant women, much less in pregnant women. Therefore, it is very important to check with your health care provider before taking any alternative therapies. He or she will not recommend a product or therapy until it is shown to be safe and effective.

**What Alternative Therapies Are Considered Safe During Pregnancy?  
  
Nausea in early pregnancy:** acupuncture, acupressure, ginger root (250 mg capsules 4 times a day), and vitamin B6 (pyridoxine, 25 mg two or three times a day) work well

**Backache:** massage therapy, chiropractic manipulation, osteopathy

**Turning a breech baby**: exercise, hypnosis, and traditional Chinese treatment (burning insense-like substance on the fifth toe) have proven beneficial

**What Alternative Therapies Should Be Avoided?**The following substances have the potential to harm a developing baby or cause early labour when used in a concentrated formulation (not as a spice in cooking).

**Avoid these oral supplements**: Arbor vitae, Beth root, Black cohosh, Blue cohosh, Cascara, Chaste tree berry, Chinese angelica (Dong Quai), Cinchona, Cotton root bark, Feverfew, Ginseng, Golden seal, Juniper, Kava kava, Licorice, Meadow saffron, Pennyroyal, Poke root, Rue, Sage, St. John's wort, Senna, Tansy, White peony, Wormwood, Yarrow, Yellow dock, vitamin A (large doses can cause birth defects)

**Avoid these aromatherapy essential oils:** calamus, mugwort, pennyroyal, sage, wintergreen, basil, hyssop, myrrh, and thyme

**Safe Medications to Take During Pregnancy**

The following medications and home remedies have no known harmful effects during pregnancy when taken according to the package directions. If you want to know about the safety of any other medications not listed here, please contact your health care provider.

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| **Allergy** | Benadryl, Chlor Triplon |
| **Cold and Flu** | Tylenol (acetaminophen), Warm salt/water gargle, saline nasal drops or spray, Robitussin DM, Vicks Cough Syrup, Halls |
| **Constipation** | Metamucil, Colace, Senekot |
| **Diarrhea** | *For 24 hours, only after 12 weeks of pregnancy:* Kaopectate, Immodium |
| **First Aid Ointment** | Bacitractin, Neosporin, Polysporin |
| **Headache** | Tylenol (acetaminophen) |
| **Heartburn** | Maalox, Mylanta, Tums, Gaviscon, Rolaids |
| **Hemorrhoids** | Preparation H, Anusol, Tucks, Witch Hazel |
| **Nausea/Vomiting** | Vitamin B6 100 mg tablet, Sea Bands, homeopathic remedies |
| **Rashes** | Hydrocortisone cream or ointment, Caladryl lotion or cream, Benadryl cream, Oatmeal bath (Aveeno) |
| **Yeast Infection** | Monistat or Canesten - *Do not insert applicator too far* |