

Taking Medicine While Pregnant or Breast-Feeding

You can still take many medicines when you are pregnant or breast-feeding. But you need to be extra careful. Use this guide and talk to your doctor and nurse to make choices that will protect you and your baby.

Know the Facts

- If you're not pregnant yet, you can help your chances for a healthy baby by planning ahead. That way you can make choices about medicines *before* you get pregnant. But always talk to your doctor and nurse first! It's very important that you keep getting treatment for any health problems.
- Your heart and kidneys work harder when you are pregnant. So medicines may pass through your body faster than normal. As a result, your doctor may give you a higher dose of your regular medicines.
- Some drugs can harm your baby at different stages of your pregnancy. At these times, your doctor might tell you to stop taking your regular medicine until it is safe to go back on it. Or your doctor may put you on a similar drug that is safer for your baby.

Check with the Label and Your Doctor

- The law says that all drug labels must explain the risks for women who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant. Your doctor can help you choose the medicines that are right for you.

Medicines to avoid include:

Aspirin

- Don't take aspirin during the last 3 months of your pregnancy, unless your doctor tells you to. Aspirin can cause problems for your baby, including when you are in labor.

Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)

- Like aspirin, it may cause problems during the last 3 months of pregnancy and when you have the baby.

Herbals, "natural" products and diet supplements

- Experts still don't know if these are safe for pregnant women, so it's best not to use them. Even "natural" products may not be good for women who are pregnant or breast-feeding.

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Warning: Be Careful With Over-the-Counter Drugs

It's very important to talk with your doctor about drugs you can buy without a prescription. Many of these "over-the-counter" drugs are safe to use before and during pregnancy. But some are not safe for pregnant women.

Taking Medicine While Pregnant or Breast-Feeding (cont.)

To Report a Problem

Contact the FDA Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program:
<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/>

To Learn More...

These three Web sites can tell you more about the risks of certain drugs before, during, and after pregnancy:

FDA's Pregnancy Labeling Initiative

<http://www.fda.gov/cder/present/dia1-2001/dkennedy/sld009.htm>

The Safe Motherhood Initiative

http://www.safemotherhood.org/init_what_is.htm

FDA/Office of Women's Health

www.fda.gov/womens