

## 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 Oscilloccinum for flu symptoms of body aches and fever

Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) – Use ONLY in 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> 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.