

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION LIST FOR PREGNANT PATIENTS

Congratulations on your pregnancy! We want to help you have the healthiest pregnancy possible and medication safety is always a question. All medications and supplements, including prescription, over-the-counter, “all natural” and herbal supplements, can potentially affect a fetus. You always want to take the least medication needed at the lowest dose and for the shortest amount of time. Try to avoid medications even more in the 1st trimester. Always listen to your provider’s advice as some situations necessitate taking medications, even in the 1st trimester. The OTC medications below are considered reasonably safe to take, should be taken as directed on the package, and are listed by generic name first as it is acceptable to get the “store brand.” Most of the safety data obtained for the medications below are from ACOG’s recommendation of referring to www.mothersbaby.org. This list may not reflect latest updates as it is not constantly updated.

Acid Reflux/Heartburn - eat small portions, low fat/acid/spice

-calcium carbonate, magnesium hydroxide (Tums, Rolaids)

-famotidine, cimetidine (Pepcid, Tagamet)

Allergies - try to use products without decongestants (see below)

-diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

-loratidine, cetirizine, fexofenadine (Claritin, Zyrtec, Allegra)

Cold/Flu/Upper Respiratory Symptoms - if you have a fever (100° or greater) take acetaminophen (Tylenol)- see below, AND CALL THE OFFICE. Only use combination products if you have all the symptoms treated by the medication.

cough - dextromethorphan (found in Robitussin, Delsym, Mucinex), cough drops

chest congestion - guaifenesin (found in Robitussin, Mucinex)

nasal/sinus congestion - nasal saline, neti pot,

phenylephrine (Sudafed PE) - the main decongestant found in combo products for cold and flu,

pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) - decongestant that can only be obtained from behind the pharmacy counter and found in combo products like Claritin-D

Both of these can raise your blood pressure and heart rate therefore minimal use, if any, is recommended.

aches - acetaminophen (Tylenol) - see below

sore throat - cough drops, throat sprays

Constipation - increase water and exercise/walking

-magnesium hydroxide (Milk of Magnesia), psyllium (Metamucil), sennosides (Senokot), docusate sodium (Colace), polyethylene glycol (Miralax)

Diarrhea - increase water, better not to use an anti-diarrheal, can use simethicone (Gas X) for gas

Fever - CALL THE OFFICE FOR A TEMPERATURE OF 100° or greater

-acetaminophen (Tylenol) - these come in 325 mg and 500 mg (extra strength) - do not take more than 1000 mg at a time and no more than **3000 mg** in a 24 hour period

Headache - increase water

-acetaminophen (Tylenol) - see fever

-Excedrin has multiple products containing different combos of acetaminophen (Tylenol), aspirin (not low dose) and caffeine - you are better off taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) and adding in caffeine (no more than 200 mg a day: 6-8 oz of coffee has about 100 mg and a 12 oz cola has about 35 mg)

Hemorrhoids - Tucks pads, any Preparation H product

Insomnia - don’t take products like “Tylenol PM” if you don’t need the pain relief too

-magnesium - can be found as oxide, citrate, etc - start at 100-250 mg and increase up to 400-500 mg an hour or two before bed

-diphenhydramine (Benadryl, most Unisom products)

-doxylamine (Unisom Sleep TABS)

Leg Cramps/Muscle Aches - increase water

-calcium (you should be getting 1000 mg a day, 1300 mg for those under 19, split your supplementation in half and take twice a day) - dietary calcium counts towards this too

-magnesium - see insomnia

-potassium - increase potassium rich foods like potatoes, avocados, squash, milk, tomatoes, bananas

-acetaminophen (Tylenol) - see fever

Nausea/Vomiting - stop your prenatal vitamin and take just folic acid (at least 600 mcg)

-ginger capsules (250 mg every 6 hours)/ginger containing products, peppermint

-pyridoxine (vitamin B6) - 25mg, 3-4 times a day ***normally sold as 100 mg and can be cut to approx. 25mg***

WITH or WITHOUT

-doxylamine (Unisom Sleep TABS) - 12.5 mg ***these are sold as 25mg, scored and easily cut in half), 3-4 times a day***

prescription Diclegis and Bonjesta are made up of the above 2 ingredients and not often covered by insurance

Rash - diphenhydramine (Benadryl) cream, calamine lotion, hydrocortisone cream

Vaginal Yeast Infection - miconazole (Monistat), clotrimazole (Gyne-Lotrimin) - for both you should use the 7 day preparation