

EARLY PREGNANCY

Tips from the ***Take Charge of Your Health!*** series



Many over the counter medications are safe for you and your baby. If you are experiencing:

THIS

TRY

Heartburn	Generic antacids (Maalox Plus, Mylanta, TUMS, Rolaids, Zantac)
Pain or fever	Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
Allergies	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) Loratadine (Claritin)
Constipation	Metamucil Docusate (Colace)
Hemorrhoids	Medicated hemorrhoid pads, Preparation H or generic cream
Common Cold Symptoms	Guaifenesin, (Robitussin, Robitussin DM), Cough drops

If you have questions or concerns about other medications, talk with your provider.

DON'T:

- **Smoke:** The toxins in cigarettes pass through your body and go directly to your baby. Smoking can hinder your ability to pass nutrients to your baby and cause low birth weight.
- **Use drugs that aren't approved by your provider:** Medications, herbal remedies, illegal substances – refrain from them all. If there is something you'd like to use, ask your provider first.
- **Follow a fad-diet:** Your developing baby is sensitive and requires a generous mix of vitamins and nutrients.
- **Use hot tubs, jacuzzis or saunas:** The high heat raises your core body temperature and can put your baby at risk for developmental issues.
- **Change the cat litter box if you have a cat:** If no one else can change the box, use gloves and wash hands with soap and water afterward.



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DO:

- **Establish OB/GYN care:** Talk with your primary care provider if you need a referral or recommendation. If questions come up in between OB/GYN visits, write them down so you can address them at your next appointment
- **Take a prenatal vitamin:** Talk with your primary care provider about the best option for you.
- **Get enough folic acid even before you plan to become pregnant:** Folic acid is a crucial nutrient in fetal brain development and can help prevent birth defects. Most prenatal vitamins contain enough folic acid, but if you can't tolerate them, take a folic acid supplement containing at least 400mg.
- **Continue exercising as usual:** Physical activity is good for you and your baby.
- **Drink plenty of water:** It will help increase blood volume and carries nutrients to your baby. It also helps prevent constipation.
- **Have sex as usual:** As long as you're comfortable, most sex positions are okay; your baby is protected by the strong muscles of your uterus.
- **Eat a balanced diet:** You need only consume an additional 300 calories per day to keep up with your developing fetus. That's a medium sandwich, or a bowl of cereal with milk and a banana, or a bag of Chex Mix.
- **Stay healthy:** If you manage a chronic disease like diabetes or high blood pressure, it's very important to talk with your doctor about what a good range for you is.
- **Limit your exposure to toxic substances and fumes to protect yourself and your baby:** Clean in well-ventilated spaces and check cleaning product labels for warnings for pregnant women.



EATING WELL-BALANCED MEALS IS IMPORTANT AT ALL TIMES, BUT IT IS EVEN MORE CRUCIAL WHEN YOU ARE PREGNANT

Most foods are safe; however there are some foods that you should limit or avoid during pregnancy.

Alcohol: No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy

Deli meat, hot dogs and paté: May be contaminated with listeria, a type of bacteria which can cause miscarriages. Heat any meat products to internal temperature of 165° F

Tuna steaks, canned albacore or chunk white tuna: Limit to 1 serving of 6 oz per week

Shrimp, crab, clams, oysters, scallops, salmon, pollock, catfish, cod: Limit to 1-2 servings = 12 oz per week

Fish caught in local waters: Check www.epa.gov for guidelines on fish from local waters. If you're unsure, limit to 6 oz per week

Fish that may contain high levels or mercury: Avoid swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel, shark, raw or undercooked fish or shellfish (e.g. clams, oysters, scallops). Avoid refrigerated uncooked seafood (labeled nova-style, lox, kippered, smoked, or jerky)

Raw Meat: Avoid sushi, and rare or uncooked beef or poultry which may be contaminated with coliform bacteria, toxoplasma, and salmonella

Raw Eggs: Avoid raw eggs and any foods containing raw eggs because of potential exposure to salmonella. Caesar salad dressings, mayonnaise, homemade ice cream, custards and Hollandaise sauces may be made with raw eggs

Unpasteurized products: Avoid unpasteurized or raw milk, juice and imported soft cheeses, which may also contain listeria. Avoid: brie, camembert, Roquefort, feta, gorgonzola and Mexican style cheeses, such as queso blanco and queso fresco. Read labels to make sure you drink only pasteurized milk