

Safeguarding Your Health and Your Baby's During Pregnancy and Nursing

Perhaps like no other time, when you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you pay more attention than ever to what goes in to your body. As you know, not all medications are safe to take while pregnant or breastfeeding. The best action is to talk to your doctor before using any medicine when pregnant or breastfeeding, or when planning to become pregnant.

While a healthcare professional is the best source of specific information for you about OTC medicines, keep these few pointers in mind, as well.

- Discuss taking any medicines during your pregnancy or while breastfeeding with your doctor, and discuss the treatment options that are appropriate for you.
- If you and your doctor decide you should start or continue taking a medication while pregnant, consider enrolling in one of the government's pregnancy registries. The goal of these registries is to gather information about specific medicines' safety during pregnancy, so future mothers can benefit from your experience.
- It is especially important not to take certain pain relievers during the last three months of pregnancy, since they may cause problems in your unborn child or complications during delivery. Discuss safe options with your doctor.
- When breastfeeding, always ask your healthcare professional before taking any medication. Keep in mind that some medications, while safe, can reduce milk production.
- If your doctor recommends you take medication while breastfeeding, time it so that you take the medicine after nursing or before your baby's longest nap. This can help reduce the concentration of medicine in your system while breastfeeding. Watch for side effects and signs of drug interactions.