

## Medications in Pregnancy

### **Cold and Flu Medications during Pregnancy**

We are frequently asked what pregnant women can take for a cold or virus. While some medications are considered safe to take during pregnancy, the effects of other medications on your unborn baby are unknown. Therefore, it is very important to pay special attention to medications you take while you are pregnant. Now is the time to learn the active ingredients in all over-the-counter medications to avoid over medicating yourself.

The following active ingredients of common over-the-counter cold medicines have no harmful effects during pregnancy when taken according to the package directions.

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Medication</u>	<u>Common Brand Name</u>
Headache or fever Cough	acetaminophen	Tylenol
	guaifenesin	Robitussin, Mucinex
Congestion	dextromethorphan	Robitussin DM
	pseudoephedrine	Sudafed
	phenylephrine	Sudafed PE
	diphenhydramine	Benadryl
	chlorpheniramine	Chlor-Trimeton

There are other generic and brand name over-the-counter cold medicines that contain these ingredients. Learn to read the “active ingredient” section of any over-the-counter medication. For a stuffy nose, try a saline spray like Ocean Nasal Mist or a Neti Pot. Other nasal sprays like Afrin contain medication that can cause rebound stuffy nose (the stuffiness gets worse when you stop the medication), and may increase your blood pressure, never use longer than 3 days.

For a sore throat, a lozenge or cough drop (that does not contain zinc) is best, Cepacol, Ricola or Halls, for example. Try to gargle with warm salt water. Ice chips and cool liquids are also soothing.

**Constipation** – Try to increase your fluid intake, supplement fiber and whole grains in your diet, and exercise.

Fibercon	Magnesium Hydroxide (Milk of Magnesia)
Metamucil	Docusate Sodium (Colace)

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**Medications in Pregnancy, Cont...**

**Gas** – Try to exercise

Simethicone (Gas X, Phazyme)

**Heartburn/Reflux** – Eat smaller frequent meals, avoid spicy, seasoned or fried food and some fruits that may exacerbate your heartburn, and remain upright for at least 30 minutes after meals. Avoid drinking liquids with meals.

TUMS

Mylanta

Maalox

famotidine (Pepcid)

Ranitidine (Zantac)

lansoprazole (Prevacid)

**Hemorrhoids** – Worsen with constipation. Increase oral fluids along with fiber supplements listed in the section for constipation.

Tucks

Preparation H

Anusol

**Allergies/Sinusitis** –

Loratadine (Claritin)

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

Certirizine (Zyrtec)

Chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton)

**Leg Cramps** – Calcium 500 mg at bedtime and half banana per day (for potassium).

**Minor itching or rash** –

Hydrocortisone cream

Benadryl cream

Oatmeal bath (Aveeno)

Sarna lotion

Eucerin Anit-Itch lotion

CeraVe cream

**Insomnia** – Decrease caffeine intake, exercise in the morning.

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)

For additional information visit [www.otispregnancy.org](http://www.otispregnancy.org) or call the Illinois Teratogen Information Service (312) 981-4354