

## Over-the-counter medications during pregnancy

This chart lists over-the-counter medicines considered "low risk" for pregnant women when taken for the occasional mild illness. Don't take more than the recommended dose and, if possible, avoid taking anything during your first trimester when your developing baby is most vulnerable.

**NOTE:** If you have a question about the safety of any medication during pregnancy, visit [www.motherisk.org](http://www.motherisk.org)

Problem	Safe to take
<b>Heartburn, gas and bloating, upset stomach</b>	Eat light meals, avoid drinking / eating 3 hrs. before bed, Avoid spicy, acidic, or fatty foods, caffeine, tobacco and alcohol.  Antacids for heartburn (Maalox, Mylanta, Rolaids, Tums)  Simethicone for gas pains (Gas-X, Maalox Anti-Gas, Mylanta Gas, Mylicon)
<b>Cough or cold</b>	Dextromethorphan, a cough suppressant (Benylin DM, Robitussin, Scot-Tussin DM, Vicks 44 Cough Relief)  Cough drops  Vicks VapoRub  Nasal saline spray or decongestant spray such as Otrivin or Dristan.  <b>Avoid cold remedies that contain alcohol. Also avoid the decongestants pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine, which can affect blood flow to the placenta.</b>
<b>Pain relief, headache, and fever</b>	Acetaminophen (Anacin Aspirin-Free, Tylenol)  Ibuprofen or Motrin / Advil are safe for the first six months but should be avoided in the last 3 months of pregnancy.
<b>Allergy relief</b>	*Antihistamines that make you drowsy are generally safe, i.e. chlorpheniramine or diphenhydramine (Chlor-Tripolon or Benadryl).  Loratadine (Claritin) and cetirizine (REactine) are also antihistamines that are proven safe during pregnancy.
<b>Constipation, hemorrhoids, and diarrhea</b>	For constipation, it is best to eat high-fibre foods or use bulk-forming agents such as Metamucil or Prodiem. Increase fluids. Do not use stimulant laxatives.  Stool softeners are safe, i.e. docusate calcium (Surfak) or docusate sodium (Colace).  For Hemorrhoids use creams or compresses. (Anusol, Preparation H, Tucks) Also try a sitz-bath with warm water.
<b>Yeast infections</b>	Most vaginal creams and suppositories are safe (Canesten, Micatin, Vagisil). Apply or insert gently as directed. Do not use products containing iodine. Use the systems that are longer term (7 day treatment versus 2 day)
<b>Nausea &amp; Vomiting</b>	Eat small meals even before feeling hungry. Avoid strong odours. Get plenty of rest and try to stay on a regular sleep and wake schedule.  Talk to your midwife about a prescription for Diclectin
<b>Hair Colours &amp; Perms</b>	Occasional use of these products, as directed is safe. Use in a well ventilated area.

**NOTE:** We've listed a few brand names as examples for each type of medication, but there are many more on the market. Be sure to check the label of every medication you consider taking to see what it contains.