

Basic Information:

Medications taken by pregnant women can cross the placenta and reach the fetus and possibly cause birth defects, particularly in the first 3 months when fetal organ systems are being formed. Therefore, it is important that pregnant women take only medications considered essential and that she understands their risk. Sometimes, the risk of the illness has to be weighed against the known or unknown risk of the medication as illnesses and infections may cause fetal problems also.

Frequently, a woman has taken a prescription or non-prescription medication even before she realizes she has missed a menstrual period and may be pregnant. Always discuss this with your health care provider at your first exam. This also includes any herbal products or homeopathic treatments you have used.

With some chronic conditions, prescribed medications that carry some risk may need to be taken to control the disorder despite the pregnancy. In these situations, health care providers will attempt to prescribe the lowest dose possible for effective treatment and reduce the risk to the fetus.

Pregnancy Risk Category:

Category A

Adequate and well-controlled studies have failed to demonstrate a risk to the fetus in the first trimester of pregnancy (and there is no evidence of risk in later trimesters).

Category B

Animal studies have failed to demonstrate a risk to the fetus and there are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women.

Category C

Animal studies have shown an adverse effect on the fetus and there are no adequate and well-controlled studies in humans, but potential benefits may warrant use of the drug in pregnant women despite potential risks.

Category D

There is evidence of risk to the human fetus, but the potential benefits of use in pregnant women may be acceptable despite potential risks (life threatening situation or for serious disease for which safer drugs cannot be used or are ineffective).

Category X

Studies in animals and humans show fetal abnormalities, or reports of adverse reactions indicative of fetal risk. These medications are contraindicated in pregnancy.

Safe Medications in Pregnancy

Heartburn:

Gas-X
Gaviscon
Mylicon
Mylanta
Maalox
Pepcid
Tums
Zantac

Constipation:

Increase fluids, add fiber
Citrucel
Colace
Fibercon Tablets
Miralax

Diarrhea:

Imodium
Kaopectate
****NO Pepto-Bismol****

Cold/Allergy:

Robitussin (plain)
Mucinex (plain)
Tylenol products: Cold, Sinus, PM, Flu
Claritin
Benadryl
Cough drops/Cepacol
Drixoral
Chloraseptic Spray
Zyrtec

Skin:

1% Hydrocortisone cream for rash/itching
Benadryl cream

Pain:

Tylenol