



Cold Medications During Pregnancy

Anyone experiencing cold or flu symptoms should consider the possibility of COVID and are encouraged to seek testing at the onset of symptoms. Please call to reschedule your appointment if you are symptomatic and have not had a negative test result.

Although some medicines are considered safe during pregnancy, the effects of other medications is unknown because pregnant people are often not included in studies that determine medication safety. For this reason, it is best to avoid taking medications during pregnancy unless absolutely necessary. If you are sick with a cold or flu, we recommend the following remedies as a first line of treatment.

Rest and Fluids: Get as much rest and sleep as possible. This will help your body fight off infection and assist in a faster recovery. During pregnancy, we typically advise half your weight in ounces of fluids per day and we recommend increasing this when you are ill. Avoid extra caffeine and focus on water or herbal teas (hot or cold). Warm drinks with honey can soothe a sore throat.

Nourishment: Eat well to fuel your body during illness. Appetite during illness may be decreased so try foods that are easily digested and are appealing to you. Reduce dairy consumption. Consider supplementing with 2000-5000 IU of vitamin D and up to 2000mg of vitamin C.

Clearing congestion: A steamy shower can help to clear nasal congestion and a warm bath can help with muscle aches and pains. A few drops of eucalyptus oil in the bath/shower can help with congestion. Try a neti pot or a saline spray like Simply Saline (or generic equivalent). Other nose sprays or drops like Afrin contain a medication that can cause rebound stuffy nose (the stuffiness gets worse when you stop the medication), and will increase your blood pressure so avoid those.

Sore throat: Lozenges or cough drops can soothe a sore or scratchy throat. Ice chips, water, and warm herbal tea with honey are also soothing.

The following ingredients of common cold and allergy medications are likely safe in pregnancy:

- acetaminophen
- chlorpheniramine
- diphenhydramine
- *doxylamine* Please note, this medication can increase blood pressure, so it should NOT be used if you have blood pressure problems.*

Read the "active ingredients" section of any over-the-counter medication. If you are unsure if a medication is safe for pregnancy, please reach out to your midwives. Please note that ibuprofen (Advil) is not safe in pregnancy.

If your symptoms are still not manageable with the following, consult your midwives for other medications to use in pregnancy.

If you have any of the following symptoms, please call the on-call midwife:

- Fever over 102°
- Persistent nausea, vomiting or diarrhea (over 24 hours)
- Severe headache
- Difficulty breathing
- Any concerns regarding the pregnancy (contractions, etc.)