

What to avoid

To ensure a healthy pregnancy, the following should be avoided. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Your pregnancy may require additional guidelines depending upon your personal situation.

Click on any of the items below for more information.

- Medications
- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Aspartame
- Sushi
- Fish (medium to large quantities)
- Smoking
- Saunas
- Tanning Beds
- Hot Tubs
- Hot Baths
- Oral Sex (cunnilingus)
- Flying (after 36 weeks)
- Driving long distances (after 36 weeks)
- High-Impact Aerobics
- Some Sports
- Snow Skiing
- Rollercoasters, Water Park Slides, etc.
- Exposure to Chemicals
- Cat Litter Boxes

Medications

Our preference is to avoid all medications during pregnancy. No medications should be taken during the first trimester (the first 12 weeks of pregnancy) unless **medically** necessary.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Do not take any medications that you are allergic to.

Do not take:

- Aspirin, or products that contain aspirin
- Ibuprofen (including Advil, Motrin, and other products)
- Alka Seltzer (which contains aspirin)
- Pepto Bismol (which contains aspirin)

The following medications are relatively safe to take during pregnancy if needed.

For the flu:

- Tylenol or Extra-Strength Tylenol
- Sudafed (regular)
- Robitussin or Robitussin DM
- Ocean Nasal Spray
- Chloroseptic Spray

For heartburn:

- Tums
- Rolaids
- Maalox (in small amounts)
- Mylanta (in small amounts)

For nausea, try to eat small meals and snacks throughout the day. If necessary, these medications can be taken:

- Unisom (one tablet) with 10mg vitamin B6
- Emetrol
- Premesis Rx

For constipation, increase your fiber by eating more fruits and vegetables. You may also consult a healthcare professional to change your prenatal vitamins to a product containing a stool softener. If necessary, these medications can be taken:

- Milk of Magnesia
- Konsyl
- Metamucil
- Colace or Surfak

For diarrhea, drink plenty of water and use Imodium. If the problem is severe or is not resolved within 3 days, call your primary care physician.

For yeast infections:

- Monistat 7 or GyneLotrimin after 12 weeks

Nutrition

During pregnancy, the average woman should gain about 25 to 35 pounds. You need only 300 additional Calories per day, which is approximately equal to 2 extra glasses of milk.

Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables to help avoid constipation.

Cook beef and pork until well done to kill all parasites which could affect the baby as well as yourself.

If you eat fish, consume less than 8 to 12 ounces per week. Avoid canned tuna, swordfish, shark and other predatory fish. These types of fish have been know to contain high levels of mercury. Avoid sushi entirely.

Avoid caffeine and alcohol during pregnancy.

Avoid aspartame products like Nutrasweet and Equal. Aspartame has not been proven to be safe during pregnancy.

Avoid smoking cigarettes and exposure to second-hand smoke.

Delivery options

There are several options to consider when planning a delivery, including:

- Delivering by cesarean section or natural childbirth
- Indications for cesarean section
- Identifying the people that should be present during delivery (family members, etc.)
- Environmental factors such as music
- Entertainment items to pass away the time, such as games and cards
- Pain control alternatives (IV, medications, epidural, Lamaze techniques)
- Choices about body position during labor

Q & A

Your doctor can help you make decisions about some of the options above.

These are general guidelines for normal pregnancies. Recommendations for your situation may vary. Click on any question below to see the answer.

How much weight should I gain during pregnancy?

The ideal weight gain for average women is 25 to 35 pounds.

▶ When will I feel the baby?

Fetal movement is usually first detected between 16 and 20 weeks. After 27 weeks, the baby should move at least 15 times per day. If the baby moves fewer than 15 times per day after 27 weeks, you should call your doctor.

▶ Is it safe to use a hot tub or take a hot bath?

No, immersion in hot water should be avoided, including baths where the water temperature exceeds 101 degrees Fahrenheit. Saunas and tanning beds should also be avoided during pregnancy.

▶ Can I have sex during my pregnancy?

Yes, under most circumstances. Intercourse should be avoided if you have ruptured membranes, placenta, previa, pre-term labor, vaginal bleeding, or if your doctor has instructed you to avoid intercourse for other reasons. Oral sex (cunnilingus) should be avoided during pregnancy. Maternal fatalities have been known to be associated with this type of oral sex.

▶ When is it safe to fly?

You can fly if you have a low risk pregnancy and are less than 36 weeks pregnant.

▶ How long can I drive?

It's usually safe to drive more than 50 miles if you have a low risk pregnancy and are less than 36 weeks pregnant. It's best to stay at elevations under 11,000 feet and refrain from exerting yourself when you are at high altitudes.

▶ Can I exercise?

You can do low impact aerobics, take walks, swim and use a stairmaster or stationary bicycle. Keep your heart rate under 140 beats per minute. Avoid sports where you can get hit by a ball, like basketball, volleyball and softball. You should also avoid activities where you can fall hard, like horseback riding, skiing, and bicycle riding.

▶ What about exposure to chemicals?

If you are working with household chemicals or paint, read the cautions on the label. It is usually OK to be exposed to latex paint for four hours or less if you are in a well-ventilated room. Hair treatments such as

permanents, highlighting, or hair coloring can also expose you to strong chemicals. Again, this exposure is usually OK in a well-ventilated room.

▶ **I've heard that cat litter boxes can be dangerous. How?**

You should avoid cleaning cat litter boxes, because the feces carry parasites that cause harm to the fetus.

▶ **Can I deliver vaginally after I've had a C-section?**

It's possible. The risks and benefits of a vaginal delivery should be thoroughly discussed with your doctor.

▶ **Do I have to have an episiotomy?**

There are pros and cons to this procedure. This is something you need to discuss with your doctor so that you can reach a decision together.