

Medicine and Pregnancy

Many pregnant women take prescription medicines for health problems like diabetes, asthma, seizures, heartburn, and morning sickness. Other women take medicines before they realize they are pregnant.

Not all medicines are safe to take when you are pregnant. Some medicines can harm your baby. Follow these four tips to help keep you and your baby safe.

1. Ask questions. Always talk to your health care provider before you take any medicines, herbs, or vitamins. Don't stop taking your medicines unless your health care provider says that it is OK.

- **I want to have a baby. What should I do about the medicine I take?** Before you get pregnant, work with your doctor to make a plan to help you safely use your medicines.
- **What medicines should I avoid?** Some drugs can harm your baby during different stages of your pregnancy. At these times, your doctor may have you take something else. Even aspirin or ibuprofen can cause problems if you take it during the last 3 months of your pregnancy.
- **Will I need to take more or less of my medicine?** Your heart and kidneys work harder when you are pregnant. This makes medicines pass through your body faster than usual. Your doctor may change how much you take.
- **What kind of vitamins should I take?** Ask about special vitamins for pregnant women. Do not take regular vitamins. They may



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before you take any
medicines during
pregnancy.

www.fda.gov/pregnancy

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have too much or too little of the vitamins that you need.

It is important to take 0.4 milligrams (400 micrograms) of folic acid every day before you become pregnant through the first part of your pregnancy. Folic acid helps to prevent birth defects of the baby's brain or spine.

- **Can I take “natural” products like herbs, minerals, and amino acids?** No one is sure if these are safe for pregnant women. So, it is best not to use them.

2. Read the drug label. Drug labels list the risks for women who are pregnant or breast feeding.

The labels tell what is known about how the drugs might affect or have affected other pregnant women.

3. Report problems. Contact the FDA to report any serious problems you have after taking a medicine.

- **Call:** 1-800-FDA-1088
- **Report Online:** www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/medwatch-online.htm

4. Sign-up for a Pregnancy Registry.

Pregnancy Exposure Registries are research studies that collect information from women who take prescription medicines or vaccines during pregnancy.

Pregnancy registries help women and their doctors learn more about which medicines are safe to take during pregnancy.

The FDA does not run pregnancy studies, but it keeps a list of all registries. See if there is a registry for your medicine. Go to:

www.fda.gov/pregnancyregistries



To Learn More:

FDA Pregnancy Website

www.fda.gov/pregnancy

OTIS

1-866-626-6847

www.otispregnancy.org

Medline Plus

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/pregnancy.htm

MOTHERISK

1-877-439-2744

www.motherisk.org/women/index.jsp