

Some things which you may have worried about but are not thought to be a concern with limited exposure:

Nutrasweet (aspartame)  
1 to 2 cups of coffee per day  
Sunscreen  
Haircoloring  
Spermicides

The following are also not thought to cause birth defects:

Computers  
Microwaves  
Electric blankets  
Waterbeds  
Airport metal detectors

Most alternative medications or herbal remedies have not been studied for use during pregnancy and are therefore **NOT RECOMMENDED** during pregnancy.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that all women take a multi-vitamin containing 0.4 mg of folic acid (which is the same as 400 mcg) prior to and throughout pregnancy. Higher doses may be recommended in specific cases.

The medications listed in this pamphlet are not necessarily recommended for use during breastfeeding. For more information about medications and breastfeeding, please contact your doctor and ITIS.



### Illinois Teratogen Information Service (ITIS)

680 N. Lake Shore Drive, Suite 1230, Chicago, IL 60611

Telephone: (312) 981-4354 or (800) 252-4847

Questions are answered

Monday-Friday 8:30 AM- 5 PM (except holidays)

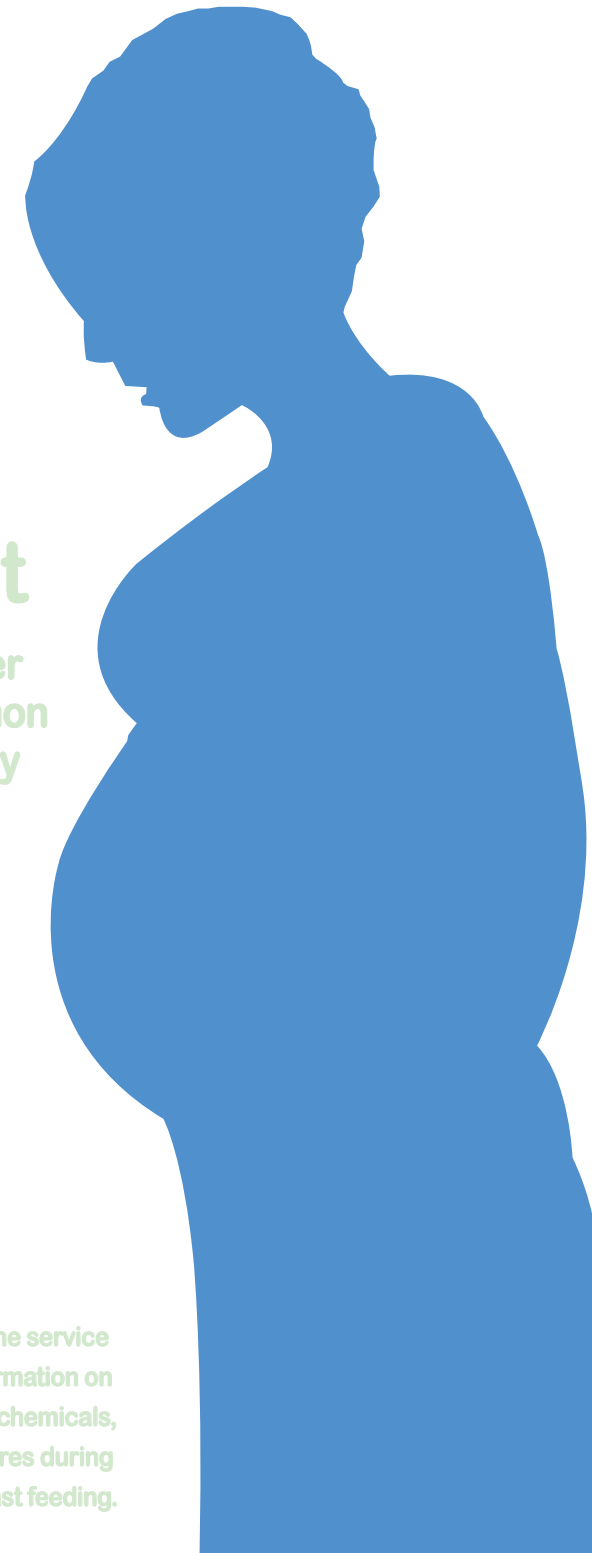
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## Facts About Over-The-Counter Medications & Common Exposures in Pregnancy

Illinois Teratogen  
Information Service (ITIS)

ITIS is a free telephone service which provides information on drugs, medications, chemicals, and other exposures during pregnancy and breast feeding.



Many women require medicine therapy during pregnancy. Some women require treatment for conditions diagnosed before pregnancy. Others must treat conditions that arise during pregnancy. Sometimes it is safer to take a medicine during pregnancy than to leave the condition untreated.

However, nonessential medicine should be avoided or minimized during pregnancy, especially in the first three months of pregnancy.

This pamphlet contains a list of preferred medicines for use during pregnancy, and is based on information available in

December 2007. The products named do not appear to increase the risk of birth defects. Future information may change this. Please remember that there is a 3% to 5% chance of a birth defect even if no medicine is taken. Birth defects caused by medicines make up only a small portion of all birth defects, but they are important since they can be prevented.

All medications should be used with caution, and directions for both dose and frequency should be followed closely.

Always discuss the use of any medication during pregnancy with your doctor prior to taking your first dose. Several principles should guide the selection of medications during pregnancy, many of which are not covered in this brochure.

Since the safety of the baby is of the utmost importance, effective drugs that have been in use for long periods of time and have been well studied during pregnancy are often preferred to newer treatments. Newer medicines may be effective or have fewer side effects in adults, but their safety in the developing baby is less likely to be known.

This list was created with only over-the-counter medicines in mind. This is not an exhaustive list. There are additional over-the-counter medicines that your doctor may recommend even though they are not on this list. Brand names (such as Tylenol or Tums) are listed in parentheses to aid in identifying products but not as an endorsement of any particular brand. Brand name products often consist of different ingredients, so it is important to check the active ingredient listed on the package. For example, Tylenol has a line of products in which some will have acetaminophen only, and some will have a variety of ingredients. In general, the least number of ingredients needed is recommended.

## Condition

## Preferred medicines during pregnancy

Acne

benzoyl peroxide topical spot treatment (Oxy, Clearasil)

Allergies

**Nasal spray:** cromolyn (NasalCrom)

**Oral:** chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton Allergy)

Constipation

**1st choice:**

Bulking agents like psyllium (Metamucil) and methylcellulose (Citrucel)

**2nd choices:**

glycerine, lactulose, sorbitol, occasional use of docusate (Colace)

Digestive Upset

**1st choices:**

calcium carbonate (Tums), calcium carbonate/magnesium hydroxide (Rolaids)

**2nd choices:**

ranitidine (Zantac), cimetidine (Tagamet HB 200)

Fever/Headache/Pain

acetaminophen (Tylenol)

\*These medicines are generally intended for short-term use only; if symptoms persist, contact your doctor