



The information provided in this guide is not meant to suggest any medical course of action without further discussion with a qualified health care professional.

BASIC GUIDELINES

- For your well-being, take the basic precautions such as resting, increasing dietary fibre, drinking increased amounts of fluids, etc.
- Report any symptoms or discomforts to your health care professional.
- There are some medications that can be taken during pregnancy. Ask your health care professional.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

DURING PREGNANCY



- Nausea and vomiting
- Heartburns and gastric reflux
- Pain
- Headache
- Backache
- Constipation
- Hemorrhoids

NAUSEA AND VOMITING

- ✱ Eat small meals even before feeling hungry.
- ⊘ Avoid strong odours.
- ✱ Get plenty of rest.

🌀 Talk to your health care professional about your symptoms and how they affect you. He/she can prescribe the right medication to properly treat your nausea and/or vomiting to prevent further complications.

- ✱ The combination of doxylamine and vitamin B₆ (Diclectin®) is the safe and effective treatment.


🌀 If symptoms persist, consult your health care professional.

HEARTBURNS AND GASTRIC REFLUX

- ✱ Eat light meals.
- ⊖ Avoid drinking or eating 3 hours before going to sleep.
- ⊖ Avoid spicy, acid or fatty food, caffeine, tobacco and alcohol.
- ✱ Lift your bedhead by 15 centimetres (approx. 6").

If these steps are ineffective:

- ✱ Try aluminum hydroxide and magnesium hydroxide (Maalox® and other similar products), calcium carbonate (Tums®) or alginic compound (Gaviscon®).

 If symptoms persist, consult your health care professional.

PAIN / HEADACHE / BACKACHE

- ✱ Relax and get some rest.
- ✱ A massage may help you.
- ✱ Acetaminophen (Tylenol®, Atasol®) is safe and may help relieve your pain.
- ✱ For aching muscles, you can use triethanolamine salicylate (Myoflex® regular cream or gel).




CONSTIPATION

- ☀ Increase dietary fibres (e.g.: bran cereals, prune juice, dates, fruits and vegetables, etc.).
- ☀ Increase fluid consumption (approx. 8 glasses a day).
- ☀ If not effective, take a commercial fibre supplement (Metamucil®, Prodiem®) or docusate sodium or docusate calcium (Colace®, Surfak®) on a daily basis.

 If constipation persists, consult your health care professional.

HEMORRHOIDS

- ☀ Prevent constipation by following the tips on the opposite page.
- ☀ Sleep on the left side, not on the back.
- ⊘ Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time.
- ☀ Use hamamelis and glycerine compresses (Tucks®) or a zinc ointment (Anusol®).
- ☀ Take sitz-bath with lukewarm water.

 If the above measures do not bring any relief or if bleeding occurs, consult your health care professional.



OTHER DISCOMFORTS



- Allergies
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion and cold
- Fever
- Prevention of insect bites
- Vaginal infection

ALLERGIES

- ✱ Chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Tripolon®) and diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) are first-line antihistamines during pregnancy.
- ✱ Loratadine (Claritin®) and cetirizine (Reactine™) are also antihistamines that are proven safe during pregnancy. They can be used if drowsiness caused by first-line antihistamines is too uncomfortable.



If symptoms persist, talk to your health care professional.



COUGH

- ✱ Dextromethorphan syrup (Balminil®-DM, Benylin®-DM) is considered safe.
 - ✱ To help eliminate secretions, drink plenty of water.
- E* If your cough lasts more than 3 days, or if it is a loose cough with greenish secretions, or if you have a fever exceeding 38.3°C, consult your health care professional.

SORE THROAT

- ✱ Throat lozenges can be used.
 - ✱ Acetaminophen (Tylenol®, Atasol®) can also relieve a sore throat.
- E* If you have difficulty swallowing, or if symptoms persist beyond 3 days, or if you have a fever exceeding 38.3°C, consult your health care professional.

NASAL CONGESTION AND COLD

- * Use nasal spray saline solution (Salinex®) as a first step.
 - * If it does not work, use a nasal spray decongestant such as xylomethazoline (Otrivin®) or oxymethazoline (Dristan® long acting) for a maximum of 3 days. Extended use could aggravate your congestion.
- ℳ If the congestion persists beyond the period of treatment, consult your health care professional.

FEVER


- * Acetaminophen (Tylenol®, Atasol®) can help lower your fever.
- ℳ However, fever exceeding 38.3°C should be evaluated by your health care professional.



PREVENTION OF INSECT BITES

- ☀ Wear long, loose, light-coloured clothing.
- ⊘ Avoid mosquitos' habitat (stagnant and shallow water).
- ⊘ Avoid outdoor activities when mosquitos are the most active (early morning, late afternoon and after sunset).
- ☀ Repellent should be sprayed on clothes and applied only on the exposed parts of the skin.
- ☀ Use products that contain less than 30% DEET.
- ⊘ Do not use products that contain both DEET and sunscreen.
- ☀ Wash your skin right after your outdoor activities.

VAGINAL INFECTION

 Always consult your health care professional when a vaginal infection is suspected.



COMMONLY USED PRODUCTS



- Alcohol • Tobacco • Caffeine
- Vitamins
- Natural products
- Sweeteners
- Sunscreen creams
- Hair colours and perms

ALCOHOL

- ⊘ Avoid drinking alcohol during pregnancy. The quantity of alcohol that could harm the baby's development is not known.



TOBACCO

- ⊘ Avoid smoking during pregnancy. It may increase the risk of having a premature and low birth weight baby.
- ⊘ Even a few cigarettes per day may be harmful; it is never too late to stop smoking during pregnancy. Giving up smoking is the nicest gift you can offer to your child.



CAFFEINE

- ! Caffeine should be used moderately.
- ! Avoid having more than 3 coffees or cola type soft drinks per day.

Tea and chocolate also contain caffeine.



VITAMINS

- * Folic acid (0.4 mg to 1 mg per day) reduces the risk of neural tube defects (e.g. spina bifida) when taken before conception and during the first trimester of pregnancy.
- * If you want to take multivitamin supplements, use prenatal vitamins, which are specifically formulated for the pregnant woman. Do not take excessive doses.
- * You can obtain over-the-counter or prescription (PregVit®) prenatal vitamins in a drugstore. PregVit formulation provides calcium and iron separately to ease their absorption.

NATURAL PRODUCTS

- ⊙ Very little information is available on the use of these products during pregnancy. It is preferable to avoid them.

SWEETENERS

- * Small amounts of artificial sweeteners, found in chewing gum, soft drinks and several other products, are not harmful during pregnancy.
- ⊙ However, avoid using these products in larger quantities, such as substitutes for table sugar.

SUNSCREEN CREAMS

! Avoid overexposure to the sun.

- * Use sunscreen with a protection factor (SPF) of 15 or over. These creams are hardly absorbed by the skin and can be safely used.



HAIR COLOURS AND PERMS

- * Occasional use of these products, as directed, is safe.
- * Use products in well-ventilated areas.

