

**Oregon Medical Group  
Center for Women's Health**

**Over the Counter (OTC) Medications  
To Use for Common Discomforts of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding**

Care should be taken during pregnancy in the use of medications, vitamins and herbal supplements. Only use medication when and if necessary. The following medications have not been shown to be of risk to the baby. When a medication is necessary, choose according to this list. NO drug is considered 100% safe during pregnancy. If a brand name is given, you may substitute generic. **We recommend ALL patients purchase a fever thermometer and a humidifier or vaporizer.**

**SYMPTOMS**

**OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATION LIST**

Headaches, mild aches and pains	<b>Tylenol, Tylenol Extra Strength</b> (acetaminophen) per package directions. Heating pad or ice/cold pack. NO ibuprofen, NO Aleve, Advil or Motrin
Nasal or sinus congestion	<b>Do not use multi-symptom cold medicines.</b> Saline-only nasal sprays such as Nasal or Ocean Spray per package directions for congestion or dryness are helpful. A nasal lavage can be used to help clear nasal passages by making a saline solution of ¼ tsp salt to ½ cup (4 ounces) of water. Tilt head back and install about 1/3 tsp (or one eye dropper) into one nostril. Then, pinching the other nostril closed, blow the irrigated nostril. Repeat on the other side. You may repeat this several times per day. A Neti Pot can also be used. <b>DO NOT use over the counter decongestants.</b> They contain phenylephrine, which has been shown to decrease blood flow to the placenta. <u>After the first 13 weeks of pregnancy, Sudafed</u> (pseudoephedrine) may be prescribed as long as you do not have high blood pressure.
Hay fever, mild allergies, runny nose	OTC antihistamines such as <b>Chlor-Trimeton</b> (chlorpheniramine maleate) may be taken per package directions. <b>Claritin, Benadryl</b> and <b>Zyrtec</b> may be taken during pregnancy and while breast feeding. Cool mist humidifier or steam treatment, are both beneficial to loosen congestion.
Cough	Most OTC cough medicines are OK. <b>Delsym, Robitussin</b> or <b>Robitussin DM</b> (dextromethorphan hydrobromide) or <b>Benadryl</b> are good. Any type of cough drop or throat lozenge is OK. Prolonged and frequent use of cough syrups should be avoided. Contact your Primary Care Provider, if symptoms persist.
Sore throat	<b>Sucrets, Cepastat, or Chloraseptic</b> are OK. Warm salt-water gargle is good (1/4 tsp to 1/2 cup water). Vitamin C in large doses (greater than 1000 mg per day) is not advised and may even be dangerous.
Fever	<b>Tylenol</b> may be taken every 4-6 hours per package directions. Do not exceed 3000 mg per day. Increase fluids. For any fever, we may refer you to your Primary Care Provider. Call your doctor, if your temperature is over 100.4 F.

## SYMPTOMS

## OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATION LIST

Heartburn, acid indigestion	Antacid tablets or liquids such as <b>Tums, Rolaids</b> (calcium carbonate) are OK. <b>Prevacid</b> and <b>Pepcid-AC</b> (famotidine) are OK to use short term -- discuss with your physician. Do <b><u>NOT</u></b> use <b>Pepto-Bismol</b> .
Flatulence/gas pain	<b>Maalox Plus, Mylanta II, Gas X</b> (contain Simethicone) are OK.
Constipation	<b>Increase water intake.</b> Avoid laxatives. <b>Increase fiber</b> and bulk foods. Examples: Raw fruit and vegetables, whole grains, bran and dried fruits. Flax seed daily (1 teaspoon on cereal, toast or yogurt), or bran and flax cereal. If dietary changes do not help, you may use a fiber supplement (ie. <b>Metamucil</b> ), stool softener (i.e. <b>Colace</b> or <b>Docusate Sodium</b> ) or gentle vegetable laxative such as prune juice or <b>Senokot</b> (senna) per package directions.
Diarrhea	<b>BRATT diet:</b> Bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, herbal tea. Call the office if not better in 48 hours. Do not use <b>Immodium</b> without discussing with your doctor first. Do <b><u>NOT</u></b> use <b>Pepto-Bismol</b> .
Hemorrhoids	<b>Preparation H, Anusol H-C, or Procto-Foam</b> (hydrocortisone) anesthetic per package directions. Keep your stools soft (see "Constipation" above), no straining.
Nausea/vomiting	<b>Powdered ginger extract:</b> 1 gram per day or capsules of 250 mg, 3 or 4 times per day. Available at health food stores. Sip <b>Ginger Brew</b> , available in grocery stores. <b>Vitamin B6:</b> 25 mg, 3-4 times per day, or 50 mg twice daily, or 100 mg at bedtime. " <b>Sea Band</b> " acupressure wristband. <b>Preggie Pops.</b>  <b>Choose only one of the following at a time. All of these drugs may cause drowsiness.</b> <b>Unisom (with doxylamine)</b> or <b>Dramamine (dimenhydrinate):</b> ½ or 1 tablet, maximum 4 tabs/day, take with <b>Vitamin B6</b> .
Stretch marks	Any type of skin lotion in fine.
Skin rash	<b>Benadryl</b> (diphenhydramine) tablets or <b>Benadryl</b> cream, <b>Cortaid</b> cream or other generic hydrocortisone 1% cream. All per package directions. If rash persists, call your doctor.
Difficulty sleeping	<b>Benadryl, Tylenol PM, Extra Strength Unisom</b> —all contain diphenhydramine. <b>Unisom Nighttime</b> (contains <b>doxylamine</b> ) and is OK anytime in pregnancy but is not recommended while breastfeeding. Take per package directions.
Urinary tract infections	Call the office for evaluation and treatment.
Yeast infections	May use any OTC <b>Monistat</b> or <b>Gyne-Lotrimin</b> 7-day vaginal yeast preparations (NOT 1 or 3 day). Call the office if symptoms have not resolved after completing treatment. Do <b><u>NOT</u></b> use Vagisil.