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**1. What can I take for a headache?**

Tylenol is safe to take for a headache, fever, or any general discomfort. Follow the recommended dosage on the bottle.

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**2. What can I take for a cold?**

Sudafed or Actifed is safe to take for a decongestant. Robitussin is safe to take for a cough. Tylenol is safe to take for fever, aches, and pains. Sore throat lozenges are safe to take for a sore throat.

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**3. What do I do if I have been exposed to Chicken Pox?**

There is no danger to your baby if you have had the chicken pox. If you are not sure, a blood test can be done to determine if you are immune. If you are not immune, please call your physician during office hours. If you think you

are developing chicken pox, please call your doctor when you see sores. DO NOT make an appointment or come into our office as you will expose other pregnant women.

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#### **4. What do I do if I have been exposed to Fifth's Disease?**

It is likely that you have had the disease as a child and are therefore immune. If you are not sure, a blood test can be done to determine if you are immune. It is not likely that you will contract the disease with casual contact. Good handwashing and hygiene are important to prevent infection. Please call your physician during office hours if you have been exposed.

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#### **5. Can I fly in an airplane?**

Travel within the Continental United States is safe up to your 35th week of pregnancy. It is important to remember to drink plenty of water, and to get up and walk about the cabin of the plane every 45 minutes. Please check with your insurance company to make sure you are covered outside the Sacramento area should an emergency arise.

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#### **6. Can I sleep on my back?**

You may sleep on your back until the third trimester as long as you are comfortable. At that time if your uterus compresses your major blood vessels you may become nauseated or dizzy. Placing a pillow under one hip should prevent these symptoms.

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#### **7. What can I do if I am constipated?**

Increase oral fluids, dietary fiber (fresh fruits and vegetables), and exercise (walking). You may try Citrucel, Metatmucil, or Fibercon. Coffee and herbal teas can also have a laxative effect and alleviate constipation. In an emergency, Dicolax suppositories or Fleet's enema may be used

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#### **8. Is it normal to have aches and pains in the pelvis?**

Early in pregnancy it is normal to feel cramping as the uterus grows and discomfort as the ligaments stretch. During the second trimester, it is normal to feel pains in the pelvis as the uterus grows, your skin stretches, and the baby moves around. During the third trimester, it is common to have a backache and sciatica. Sciatica causes shooting pains down the back of the leg and buttocks. Toward the end of the third trimester, ligaments in the hips and pelvis loosen causing discomfort. The baby may kick nerves on the inside of the uterus causing shooting pains toward your upper abdomen or vagina. Areas of numbness may also occur on your abdomen. Any pain that persists or is severe should be evaluated by a physician. If you are concerned about preterm labor, please call your physician.

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#### **9. When can I expect to feel the baby move?**

You can expect to begin to feel the baby move at about 20 weeks of pregnancy. You may not feel regular movements until 26 weeks of pregnancy.

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#### **10. Is it normal to have vaginal spotting or bleeding after my vaginal exam or intercourse?**

Yes, it is common to have spotting or bleeding in these situations. The spotting should resolve in about 24 hours. Call for heavy bleeding (like a period) or prolonged bleeding.

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#### **11. I have asthma (or allergies). Can I continue my regular medications?**

Yes. You need to be healthy for the baby to be healthy. Use of inhalers such as Ventolin, Asmacort, Proventil, or Flonase will help to keep the breathing passages open. If you are on an antihistamine, Claritin, Chlor-Trimeton, Benadryl, Dimetapp and Zyrtec are safe.

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#### **12. You say I am 20 weeks pregnant. How many months is that?**

Obstetricians have standardized timing a pregnancy to 40 weeks so that it is easier to communicate and determine due dates as well as testing. The first day of your last menstrual period is used to calculate your due date. 20 weeks is exactly half way through your pregnancy or about 4 1/2 months along.

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### **13. My dentist needs to take x-rays. Is this okay?**

You should continue to care for your teeth in the normal manner. If X-rays are necessary, your dentist will shield the baby. Filling cavities or taking antibiotics if prescribed by your dentist is safe and desirable as pregnancy can increase dental disease. Ampicillin is the most common antibiotic and is safe during pregnancy. br /> [<< Back to top](#)

### **14. My feet are swollen. Is this normal??**

Mild swelling of the ankles and legs is related to the normal and necessary increase in body fluids during pregnancy. To ease the discomfort, elevate your legs or lie down when you can, wear comfortable shoes, and avoid elastic-top socks or stockings. Drinking at least 8 to 10 eight to ounces glasses of water a day will help to avoid excess water retention. Support hose may also help to ease the discomfort.

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### **15. It it okay to have my hair colored, highlighted, or permed? What about artificial nails?**

There is no information that any of these procedures will hurt your baby. Please weigh any benefits against any unknown potential risks.

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### **16. Will it hurt the baby if I don't take my prenatal vitamins?**

Taking prenatal vitamins with folic acid or folic acid alone during the first trimester may decrease the incidence of neural tube defects like spina bifida. There is no data that after the first trimester prenatal vitamins are essential.

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### **17. I would like to take a hot bath. Is this okay?**

Studies show that hot saunas during the first trimester may cause miscarriage. There is no evidence that hot baths cause any fetal harm.

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### **18. I have a sinus infection. Can I take antibiotics?**

Yes. The only antibiotic that you should absolutely not take in pregnancy is tetracycline. Avoid sulfa antibiotics in the third trimester.

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### **19. Will higher elevations and altitude be harmful to the baby?**

No, but if you have any difficulty breathing you should return to a lower elevation.

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### **20. Is it okay to have sexual intercourse during pregnancy?**

There is no evidence that sex causes miscarriage or premature labor. You may be sexually active until labor starts unless your physician instructs you otherwise. Lubricants such as Astroglide or KY jelly are not harmful.

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### **21. Will stress hurt the baby?**

No.

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### **22. I have pressure in my lower pelvis. Is this normal?**

Yes.

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### **23. It feels as if my heart is racing. Is this normal?**

Yes, it is common to have palpitations. Notify your physician if you have fainting spells.

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### **24. I think I have a yeast infection. What medication can I use?**

It is safe to use any of the over-the-counter medications designed for treating a yeast infection.

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### **25. What can I use to relieve the discomfort of hemorrhoids?**

Use Preparation H, Anusol HC cream or Tucks medicated pads to relieve hemorrhoidal discomfort. Increase the fluids and fiber in your diet to decrease constipation.

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**26. I don't drink milk and would like to know how much calcium I need to take.**

The recommended daily allowance during pregnancy is 1500 mg daily. TUMS antacid is the easiest sources of calcium to take. If you are taking your prenatal vitamin, you need only take an additional 500mg of calcium twice a day, or three servings of milk products.

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**27. I have varicose veins. Is there anything I can do to alleviate the discomfort and prevent them from getting worse?**

Avoid long periods of standing or sitting. When sitting elevate your legs above the level of your hips. Try wearing support panty hose throughout the day. Exercise, such as walking 20 to 30 minutes daily, is also helpful. If you are experiencing uncomfortable vulvar varicosities, wearing maternity exercise or bicycle shorts may help.

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**28. Is it safe to exercise?**

Yes. We recommend exercise as it makes labor easier, decreases the incidence of pre-term labor as well as cesarean section. If an exercise causes cramping, shortness of breath, or pain, then decrease the intensity or stop exercising. You should be able to carry on a conversation while you exercise. This is usually the equivalent to a pulse below 140 beats/minute. Scuba diving, skiing, horseback riding, and water skiing are strongly discouraged.

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**29. I drank wine, beer, or alcohol before knowing I was pregnant. Will this harm my baby?**

The baby has different blood circulation very early in pregnancy. A small amount of alcohol before missing a period is very unlikely to hurt the baby. After you know that you are pregnant, you should avoid all alcohol.

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**30. The baby's heart rate is fast. Does this mean that the baby is a girl or boy?**

Heart rate does not determine whether the baby is a girl or boy. The only way to determine the sex of the baby is through a genetic amniocentesis which is usually done after the age of 35.

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**31. I just had a second trimester ultrasound and the size of the baby does not correspond with the gestational age. Does this mean that my due date is different?**

If the dates are off by greater than 2 weeks, then the due date may be changed. It is common to have uterine contractions and visualize fibroids during the ultrasound.

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**32. Should I get a flu shot when I am pregnant?**

It is recommended by the Center for Disease Control to have the flu vaccine if you will be in your second or third trimester of pregnancy during the flu season.

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