

- **HEADACHES** -- Pregnant women should avoid the over-the-counter painkillers aspirin and ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, etc.) during pregnancy. But acetaminophen (Tylenol) is considered safe by doctors. Common tension headaches are usually caused by stress, and may improve with relaxation techniques. Other headaches often have triggers -- such as chocolate, caffeine, or nitrates -- that can be identified and eliminated. Women should avoid hot dogs, salami, ham, bacon and other meats cured with nitrates if they are experiencing headaches in pregnancy. Omega – 3 oils may be a migraine preventive. The supplement should be taken over the long term. Fish are high in Omega - 3 fatty acids. Women who suffer from migraines or other severe headaches will have to consult a doctor for stronger, safe medication.
- **MUSCLE ACHES** -- These generally go away on their own, but you can make yourself feel better with gentle massage or warm heat on the affected area. Tylenol can also relieve the pain. If muscle soreness doesn't disappear on its own after a few days, consult your doctor.
- **HEARTBURN OR INDIGESTION** – Try papaya enzymes, chamomile tea, chewing gum, a fireball (yes, bizarre, but it does indeed work!), rubbing olive oil from base of neck to sternum, sitting upright, or taking a walk to speed digestion. Marshmallow root has a very high mucilage content that swells when combined with water to form a soft, soothing protective gel. This can provide heartburn relief in 15 to 30 minutes. 2 capsules after meals. Mercurius Solubilis 6C three times daily. Doctors say most of the over-the-counter antacids are safe during pregnancy, including Tums, Gaviscon, non-sodium Rolaids, Mylanta, and Maalox. However, Tums may contribute calcification of the placenta, so use this as a last resort. Avoiding greasy, high fat or spicy foods and caffeine, which seem to irritate the stomach, may also help. Do not overeat! Eat slowly when you eat. There are several food that can cause heartburn by relaxing the sphincter: chocolate, caffeine, fatty foods, alcohol, and possibly onions. Other foods which increase acids and pain are beer, colas, coffee, and milk.
- **COLDS AND ALLERGIES** -- Humidifiers, vaporizers and drinking lots of fluids can help with cold and allergy symptoms. Rest and wash hands frequently. Increase liquid intake to keep nasal secretions thin. Herbal teas with lemon juice added to them are best. (For colds: Vitamin C with bioflavonoids – 500-1000mg every 1-2 hours. Zinc lozenges containing 23 mg elemental zinc taken every 2 hours for a maximum of one week.) Using a saline spray can also moisturize irritated and inflamed tissues and ease symptoms. If you're suffering badly early in your pregnancy, the safest option is a nasal spray such as Neosynephrine, since nasal sprays have a local effect, and aren't absorbed much into the bloodstream. After

- the first trimester, your midwife may give you the okay to use over-the-counter decongestants such as Actifed or Sudafed. Many antihistamines are also considered safe after the first trimester; ask your doctor for specific recommendations.
- **COUGH** – Drink extra liquids, particularly water. Chicken soup is also soothing and helpful. Eliminate irritating factors such as cigarette smoke, perfumes, dry air, etc. Wild Cherry Bark is well-known for its ability to quiet a harsh cough. Shonda Parker has a combination called ‘Wild cherry coffaway” from tri-light herbals that is very soothing. It is available from the urban homemaker(<http://www.urbanhomemaker.com/>) and other health food stores. Marshmallow root in a tea combined with licorice, plantain and thyme. While many over-the-counter cough syrups are safe, the big concern here is the alcohol they contain. Even though the amount of alcohol consumed in a few teaspoons of cough syrup is minimal, it's wise to ask your physician or pharmacist to recommend a cough syrup with no- or low-alcohol content.
  - **INSOMNIA** – Eliminate natural stimulants, such as caffeine and alcohol. Eat a good snack 30-45 minutes before going to bed – oatmeal, other whole grain cereals, breads, muffins. Relax, do birth relaxation and breathing techniques to center yourself before you go to bed. Exercise in the mornings or early evenings for 20 minutes. Do not overeat at the evening meal. Go to bed at the same time every night. Drink a soothing evening tea, like chamomile or passionflower before bedtime. Take an herbal calcium supplement such as ChamoCalm by Mother’s Choice before bed

Sources: Shonda Parkers *Naturally Healthy Pregnancy*

[www.about.com](http://www.about.com)

<http://www.babycenter.com/refcap/pregnancy/prenatalhealth/242.html>