



Carolin HealthCare System

Charlotte OB/GYN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING PREGNANCY

Can I drink diet soft drinks or eat foods containing Aspartame, Splenda, or Nutri Sweet? Yes, Aspartame has been studied for over 30 years and has not ever been shown to cause any birth defects. Nonetheless, because it is an artificial sweetener, we would recommend you use in moderation.

Can I drink caffeine? Excessive doses of caffeine have been shown to increase the miscarriage rate (the equivalent of four 8 oz. cups of coffee daily). Therefore, we recommend you limit your intake to one cup in the first trimester. Caffeine is neutralized more slowly in pregnancy; therefore, you may get palpitations with normal amounts of caffeine.

Can I have dental work? You can have fillings, work on braces, dental cleaning; however, you should have appropriate shielding with x-rays. Local anesthesia that is injected into the gums is safe in pregnancy.

What medications can I use to help skin blemishes? Most over the counter products are okay to use including most cosmetics. Retinols, such as Retin-A tablets or cream, have not been studied in pregnancy, and since these are derivations of vitamin A, they should be avoided. Products containing benzoperoxide and salicylic acid are safe.

Can I use hair removal products? Nair is safe to use in pregnancy. A prescription medication called Vaniqa is currently labeled as Category C and should only be used if the benefits outweigh the risks.

Can I use tooth whiteners? The ingredients used in these toothpastes/gels have never been studied in pregnancy. It is not clear how much of these agents are absorbed, therefore, they should be avoided. Of note, gum bleeding in pregnancy is not uncommon and should not be a concern unless excessive.

Can I use any herbal products? Some herbal products have been studied in pregnancy, but if you have a specific concern, it is best for you to bring the herbal product to your doctor for review. Most herbal remedies have not been studied in pregnancy, and therefore, their unknown benefits will have to be weighed against their unknown risks.

Are any vitamins needed in addition to a prenatal vitamin? No. Vitamins come in all shapes and sizes and as long as they have the appropriate iron, folic acid, and calcium content and are well tolerated by you, there is usually no additional vitamin needed.

Can I use hair color or highlights? These products can be utilized anytime during pregnancy in a well ventilated area.

Can I use artificial nails and polish? Yes, these are safe to use during pregnancy.

Can I have a PPD/tine test (TB test)? Yes, these tests are safe in pregnancy, and if recommended should be obtained.

704/446-1700

Morehead Medical Plaza
1025 Morehead Medical Dr., Suite 400
Charlotte, NC 28204

Arboretum Prof. Park
7810 Providence Rd., Suite 101
Charlotte, NC 28226

Northcross Medical Park
16455 Statesville Rd., Suite 480
Huntersville, NC 28078

Morrocroft Medical Plaza
4525 Cameron Valley Pkwy., Suite 2500
Charlotte, NC 28211

Frequently Asked Questions In Pregnancy, continued

When is it not safe to have intercourse? Intercourse is safe at anytime during pregnancy unless your physician has instructed you otherwise. In the setting of bleeding or if your vaginal discharge is unusual for you or abnormal, seek medical attention first before having intercourse. If you have questions about this at all, please do not hesitate to ask your physician.

Should I have a flu shot? Because pregnancy can compromise the immune system, we recommend the flu vaccine if you will be pregnant during the flu season. The vaccine is safe to receive anytime during pregnancy, including the first trimester.

What can I do for exercise? Exercise in pregnancy is encouraged and recommended and should be a daily part of your routine unless otherwise instructed by your physician. Yoga, bicycling, and tennis are safe in pregnancy. You should avoid skiing and horseback riding once you are out of the first trimester. There is no need to monitor your heart rate as this has not been shown to be helpful. You can start a new exercise program even if you were not exercising prior to being pregnant. Please contact your physician should you have questions regarding this.

Can I see a chiropractor? Most chiropractors are not trained in the management of pregnant patients. It is unclear whether certain adjustments may be detrimental to pregnancy. Therefore, unless you have a specific problem unrelated to pregnancy, you should not see a chiropractor. If you think you need to be seen by a chiropractor, it is important to establish yourself with one who has excellent credentials in pregnancy.

Can I get a massage? Body positioning is important as you will need to either lie on a specially designed table or avoid positioning that could be detrimental to the baby. Getting a massage is certainly something we encourage, but make certain you are seeing someone experienced in taking care of pregnant patients.

Can I have a mammogram? Mammograms are x-rays, and therefore, screening mammograms should not be obtained while pregnant. Ultrasounds of the breast, however, are acceptable, and if a breast mass is present, your physician may send you for an ultrasound rather than a mammogram.

Can I be exposed to paint? Many of you will be decorating your new nursery and other rooms of your house. As long as there is good ventilation (open window with a fan), it is okay to paint.

Can I use an exterminator? Check with your exterminator first as all exterminating companies use different solutions. They frequently spray in homes that have pregnant women and small children and will give you their recommendation for the amount of time you need to vacate the premises.

What travel precautions do I need to take? You are allowed to travel outside of the Charlotte area up until 34 weeks of pregnancy unless your physician has instructed otherwise. If you plan to travel in a car, it is important to walk for approximately 10 minutes every 2 hours. This is important to keep blood from staying still in your legs for too long of a time. If you spend too much time in a seated position, you can increase your risk of blood clots, which can be fatal. If you plan to travel on a plane, we recommend you get up and walk for about 5 to 10 minutes as a plane's environment is much drier and be more dehydrating. You can travel by plane or boat up until 36 weeks of pregnancy, and after that point, it is not recommended.