babytalk mom-to-be

# stay-healthy guide

| | treatment | what else may help | call the doctor... | new moms say... |
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| cold/flu | Most ob-gyns give out a list of approved medicines for treating cold and flu symptoms, which may include Tylenol Sinus, Dimetapp, Drixoral, Robitussin and Chloraseptic throat spray. (**Sudafed should be avoided** during the first trimester.) | Get lots of rest and drink fluids. "A cold or the flu can last a week, but you should start to feel a little better after the first couple of days," says Hal Lawrence, M.D., clinical professor of ob-gyn at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill. | If you're feeling more achy than when it started, if **your temperature has been over 102°F** for a few days, or if you have greenish mucus, your illness may be bacterial, requiring antibiotics. | "To soothe my aching bones when I had a cold or the flu, I cranked up the heated seats in my car while driving—or even just when I sat in the driveway." —Melissa Kingsland, Amesbury, MA |
| headache | Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is fine to take, but avoid aspirin and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Aleve) as they can affect fetal circulation. **If you get migraines**, speak with your doctor before taking any medication. | **Avoid headache triggers**: loud music, stressful situations, hunger, and thirst. Keep healthful snacks on hand as well as a water bottle to **stave off low blood sugar** and dehydration. Applying a cold or warm compress can help, as can massage and acupuncture. | If your headaches or migraines persist or don't improve after a couple of days. Also call your health care provider if you have bad headaches or migraines on a consistent basis; later in pregnancy, they can be a warning sign of high blood pressure. | "Tylenol didn't really work for me, so I'd lie down in a dark room with a **hot or cold compress over my head** instead. It eased the pain and helped me fall asleep." —Lindsey Coffman, Springfield, MO |
| diarrhea/stomach bug | Pepto-Bismol may help with a number of ailments (nausea, upset stomach); Kaopectate and Imodium AD are fine to take as well. You can also **stop taking your prenatal vitamin** for a couple of days (they tend to make women nauseous anyway). | **Flat decaf soda**, water, **Popsicles**, and crackers may ease nausea. "Drink a lot of liquids to **avoid dehydration**," says Sharon Phelan, M.D., professor of ob-gyn at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine in Albuquerque. | If you can't keep anything down, including water, for **more than 24 hours**; if you have a fever; or if you have any of the signs of dehydration (dizziness, fainting, weakness, and fatigue). | "My doctor said **fluids were most important** when I was throwing up, and that the baby and I would be fine if we didn't eat much for a couple of days." —Jennifer Paquette, Johnson, VT |
| allergies/asthma | Continue allergy shots under your doctor's supervision, but don't begin them for the first time now. Chlortrimatron, Benadryl, and Claritin are believed to be safe. **Stick to your asthma action plan**; inhaled treatments are preferred over oral ones. Primatene Mist isn't recommended. | Avoid **pet dander**, **dust**, **pollen**, **mold**, **smoke**, and temperature changes. Nasal rinses and steroid sprays can flush out irritants. | If your usual medications don't seem to be working or **you start to feel worse than usual**. Also call your health care provider whenever your asthma action plan indicates you should do so. | "**Benadryl is a lifesaver** for allergies. It helped me sleep at night and was safe for the baby." —Amanda Donehew, Knoxville, TN |
| depression | Treatment of depression is essential for the health of both you and your baby. **Several safe medications are available** (talk to your doctor about the risks, if any, of certain drugs and to find the one that's best for you). Counseling can be effective, too. | Some cases of mild to moderate depression or anxiety may not require medication—**cognitive therapy may work well**. | If medication doesn't help or **you just need to talk to someone**. "There's a universal belief that pregnancy is joyful, but that's not always the case," says Lee Cohen, M.D., director of the Center for Women's Mental Health at Massachusetts General Hospital. | "I suffer from constant panic/anxiety disorder and I take Klonopin. I was told 3 mg a day is safe, though I was able to cut back to 1½ mg and felt fine." —Heather Ustaitis, Worcester, MA |