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Pregnancy: Common Questions

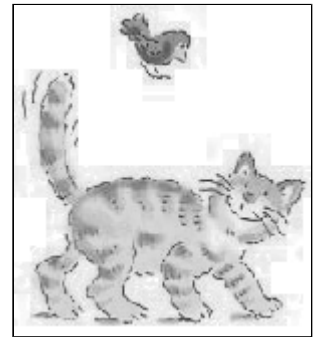
There are plenty of myths and “old wives’ tales” surrounding pregnancy. You may need help separating fact from fiction. On this sheet, you’ll find answers to a few common questions. If you have other questions, talk with your health care provider.

Will Working Harm My Baby?

In most cases, working throughout your pregnancy is not harmful at all. There may be concerns if the job involves dangerous machinery or chemicals, lifting, or standing for very long periods of time. Talk to your health care provider and employer about your particular job and pregnancy.

Why Can’t I Change the Cat Litter Box?

Cats carry a disease called toxoplasmosis. In adult humans, it shows up as a mild infection of the blood and organs. If you are infected during pregnancy, the baby’s brain and eyes could be damaged. To be safe, have someone else change the litter. If you must handle it, wear a paper mask over your nose and mouth. Also, wear gloves and wash your hands afterward.



Which Medications Are Safe?

No prescription or over-the-counter drug is safe for everyone all of the time. But sometimes medications are needed. Be sure your health care provider knows you are pregnant. Then use only the medications he or she advises you to take.

Is It True That I Can Overheat My Baby?

Yes. To avoid making your baby too warm:

- Don’t sit in a jacuzzi. A long, warm bath is fine, but not in water over 100°F.
- Exercise less intensely if you feel fatigued. Base your workout on how you feel, not your heart rate. Heart rates aren’t a good way to measure effort during pregnancy.

Can I Lift and Carry Safely?

Yes, if your health care provider doesn’t tell you otherwise. Learn to lift and carry safely to avoid injury and reduce back pain during pregnancy. To protect your back:

- Bend at the knees to bring the load nearer.
- Get a good grip. Test the weight of the load.
- Tighten your abdomen. Exhale as you lift.
- Lift with your legs, not with your back.
- Carry the load close to your body.
- Hold the load so you can see where you are going.

What If I Get Sick?

Most women get sick at least once during pregnancy. Talk with your health care provider if you do. Most likely it will not affect your pregnancy. Get plenty of rest and fluids, and eat what you can. Talk to your health care provider before taking any medications.