

COLD AND FLU INFORMATION DURING PREGNANCY

If you develop a head cold and need a decongestant, **plain Sudafed** (pseudoephedrine) may be taken. This medication is no longer available on the shelf, but it is available at the pharmacy department in drug stores. Sudafed PE is on the shelf, but **should not** be taken while pregnant. **Guaifenesin** (Mucinex 600, Robitussin) or **dextromethorphan** (Robitussin DM) may be used for coughing. It is advisable to use **Tylenol** (acetaminophen) for a fever over 100.4 degrees. Tylenol will also be helpful for the aches and pains of the flu, and for headaches associated with sinus congestion.

Antihistamines are used for allergy symptoms, such as sneezing, itchy eyes, and runny nose. **Diphenhydramine** (Benadryl) and **chlorpheniramine** are useful, and are preferred in the first trimester, but **Claritin** (loratadine) or **Zyrtec** (cetirizine) may be used, if necessary.

Normal saline nasal spray for nasal congestion and throat lozenges of any type are safe at any time in pregnancy, with the exception of **zinc lozenges**. These **should not** be used. If you have a fever over 100.4 degrees for more than 48 hours, a persistent cough or sore throat, or greenish-yellow nasal or oral discharge, please contact your family doctor. **Do not use** any other over-the-counter medication without contacting one of our Obstetric Nurse Specialists at the office (717-397-8177).

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended that **all** women who will be pregnant during influenza season should be vaccinated, regardless of their stage of pregnancy. Peak flu season is typically from late December through early March. The ideal time to obtain the flu vaccine is in October and November in order to receive protection during the peak season.

Talk to your provider today to schedule your vaccination.

Please let us know if you have any questions.