Flu and Cold While Pregnant: Symptoms & Safe Treatments

When you're pregnant, dealing with the flu or a cold can feel a bit more stressful, but with the right info, you can easily take care of yourself and your baby.

Here's a handy guide to help you manage these common illnesses during pregnancy.

COLD SYMPTOMS

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sore Throat
- Mild cough
- Sneezing
- Generally mild & develop gradually

FLU SYMPTOMS

- High fever (often over 100.4)
- Severe body aches
- Fatigue and weakness
- Chills and Sweats
- Headache
- Dry, persistent cough
- Symptoms often come on suddenly

Signs to be aware of:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent chest or abdominal pain
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- High fever that doesn't respond to acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Decreased fetal movement

If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.

Safe Treatments During Pregnancy

FOR COLDS

Rest: Make sure to get plenty of sleep and stay hydrated.
Hydration: Drink water, herbal teas, and broths to stay hydrated and soothe a sore throat.
Humidifier: Use a cool-mist humidifier to ease stuffy nose.
Saltwater Gargle: Gargle with warm salt water to relieve a sore throat.
Tylenol (Acetaminophen): Safe for reducing fever and relieving aches and pains, but always follow dosage instructions and consult your doctor.

FOR THE FLU

Antiviral Medications: If diagnosed early, your healthcare provider may prescribe antiviral medications like Tamiflu, which are safe during pregnancy.
Hydration and Rest: Drink fluids and rest as much as possible.
Tylenol (Acetaminophen): Safe for managing fever and body aches.

Preventing the Flu & Colds

Flu Shot: The flu vaccine is safe and recommended for pregnant women.
It helps protect you and your baby, both during pregnancy and after birth.
Hand Hygiene: Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially after coughing, sneezing, or touching public surfaces.
Avoid Sick Contacts: Try to avoid close contact with people who are sick.
Healthy Diet: Maintain a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and proteins to support your immune system.
Stay Hydrated: Drink plenty of fluids to keep your body well-hydrated.
Prenatal Vitamins: Continue taking your prenatal vitamins as prescribed to help support your immune system.

WHEN TO CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

If your symptoms worsen or don't improve after a few days
If you have a persistent high fever
If you notice any changes in your baby's movements
If you have any concerns about the medications you're taking

REMEMBER

When you're pregnant, it's always better to play it safe. If you're unsure about your symptoms or how to handle them, reach out to your healthcare provider. Your health and your baby's well-being come first.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
Information on flu and cold management during pregnancy.

American Pregnancy Association (APA):
Tips on staying healthy during pregnancy.

Your Healthcare Provider:
Always consult with your doctor or midwife before starting any new treatments.