

## **Common Cold Remedies for the Pregnant and Breastfeeding**

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### **If you are Pregnant (1,2):**

#### **Safe to Take:**

- Tylenol, Nyquil, Zinc or Zicam
- Dextromethorphan (e.g. Robitussin, Delsym) cough syrup
- Benadryl and other antihistamines in its class.
- Nasal Saline sprays and irrigation
- Nasacort, a nasal steroid
- Cough syrups made from honey and lemon juice.
- Ginger is the only herbal supplement that has good research showing it is safe to take in Pregnancy. Ginger may also help with morning sickness.

#### **Unsafe to Take:**

- Mucinex, Sudafed (pseudoephedrine), Afrin (oxymetazoline), Chloraseptic Spray, Dayquil
- Phenylephrine by itself and combination products containing Phenylephrine.
- Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, and Aleve should all be avoided unless prescribed by a physician.

#### **Unknown if Safe to Take:**

- Menthol Cough drops
- Other Herbal Supplements marketed for the common cold
- Cepacol and Sucrets throat lozenges and sprays and the like

### **If you are Breastfeeding (3):**

#### **Safe to Take:**

- Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, Afrin (oxymetazoline)
- Nasacort (nasal steroid)
- Benadryl. Occasional small doses do not hurt the baby or the milk supply. Larger (>50mg), more frequent doses may.

#### **Unsafe to Take:**

- Aleve

#### **Unknown if Safe to Take:**

- Zinc
- Cepacol and Sucrets throat lozenges and sprays
- Other Herbal Supplements marketed for the common cold
- Mucinex. No research done on this, but the small amount that gets into breast milk is unlikely to harm a baby.
- Dextromethorphan (Robitussin, Delsym, Nyquil). No research studies on this, but, if taken as prescribed, the small amount that gets into breast milk is unlikely to harm a baby.

#### **Meds that May Decrease your Milk Supply, but are otherwise safe for the baby (i.e. 1-2 doses won't hurt):**

- Phenylephrine (e.g. Dayquil)
- Sudafed (pseudoephedrine). It may cause some irritability in the baby. You should not take it if you are just starting to breastfeed a barely newborn baby.

#### **Resources:**

1. Servey J, Chang J. Over-the-Counter Medications in Pregnancy. *Am Fam Physician*. 2014 Oct 15;90(8):548-555.
2. Lexicomp database.
3. Lactation medicine database. <http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/newtoxnet/lactmed.htm>