

# POISONology

SAFETY & FIRST AID TIPS FROM THE ARIZONA POISON AND DRUG INFORMATION CENTER

## Pregnant during allergy season?



With warm temperatures comes pollens from trees, grass and weeds which can trigger allergies. Plus, allergy and asthma symptoms can worsen during pregnancy due to hormonal changes and trouble breathing. It can be hard to know which allergy medications and treatments will work for you without harming your pregnancy. So what is the best way to manage your allergies during pregnancy and breastfeeding?

### How to manage and reduce allergy-causing substances

- **Reduce the allergens in your home.** Replacing air filters and performing in-depth cleaning (vacuuming, dusting and washing linens) can go a long way in removing potential allergens such as pet dander and dust mites. If possible, have someone else do the cleaning for you.
- **Start with non-medicated treatments.** Warm steam humidifiers or saline nasal rinses can help clear the sinuses and minimize congestion.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Staying hydrated can help minimize cold and allergy symptoms, and drinking enough fluid is particularly important in hot desert summers.
- **Allergy shots can usually be continued in pregnancy.** It is generally not recommended to begin allergy shots during pregnancy. This is to avoid potential severe allergic reactions that could cause you to go into shock. However, if you receive allergy shots regularly, you should be able to continue getting them during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- **Questions about the safety of medications?** Call us! The board-certified genetic counselors at MotherToBaby Arizona provide free, confidential expert advice about the safety of medications or other exposures during pregnancy and breastfeeding. **Call us toll-free at 1-888-285-3410.**
- **More than just allergies?** Pregnant women are at increased risk for complications from illnesses such as the flu. If you think your symptoms are not related to allergies or if you have a fever, contact your health care provider. Fever can be treated during pregnancy with acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- **Check out the MotherToBaby/OTIS website.** MotherToBaby Arizona is proud to be affiliated with MotherToBaby, formerly the Organization of Teratology Information Specialists (OTIS). The site provides fact sheets that answers questions about common exposures during pregnancy and breastfeeding. <http://www.mothersbaby.org/>