Pregnancy & Medications

**Medications & Pregnancy**

Pregnancy, whether planned or a pleasant surprise, brings with it important concerns about prescription and over-the-counter medications. Not every medication poses a risk to your unborn baby; however, some do. It is important to talk to your doctor.

**SAFE in Pregnancy**

The following medications can be used safely throughout pregnancy:

- Prednisone
- Watch for diabetes in pregnancy
- May increase risk for infection
- High doses may result in pre-term birth
- Hydroxychloroquine
- Sulfasalazine & Folic Acid 5 mg/day
- Azathioprine at less than 2mg/kg/day
- Cyclosporine/Tacrolimus
- Widely used in transplant patients
- IVIG
- Certolizumab
- Does not cross the placenta

**Use with CAUTION in Pregnancy**

Some medications can be used with caution in pregnancy or must be stopped at a certain point in time

- NSAIDs
- e.g. Naproxen, Ibuprofen, Diclofenac, Celecoxib, Indomethacin, Meloxicam
- Should be stopped before week 28
- Infliximab, Adalimumab, Etanercept, and Golimumab
- Please discuss with your doctor

**AVOID in Pregnancy**

The following medications are UNSAFE in pregnancy. Women taking these medications should be using reliable contraception (i.e., the birth control pill)

- Methotrexate
  - Stop 3 months prior to trying conceive
  - May cause birth defects. If you become pregnant on this medication stop immediately and contact your doctor.
  - Increased rates of miscarriage.
- Leflunomide
  - May cause birth defects. If you become pregnant on this medication stop immediately and contact your doctor.
  - Consider a Cholestyramine washout
  - Talk to your rheumatologist about changing medications prior to trying to get pregnant
- Cyclophosphamide
  - Can reduce fertility in men and women
  - May cause birth defects and miscarriage
  - Stop 3-6 months prior to trying to conceive
- Rituximab
- Mycophenolate
  - Stop 3 months prior to trying conceive
  - May cause birth defects. If you become pregnant on this medication stop immediately and contact your doctor.
  - Increased rates of miscarriage.
- Limited Data Available for Anakinra, Tocilizumab, Tofacitinib, Ustekinumab, Belimumab, Abatacept. Discuss with your doctor

**SAFE in Breast Feeding**

The following medications can be used safely while breast feeding:

- NSAIDs
- Prednisone
- Hydroxychloroquine
- Sulfasalazine with folic acid 5 mg/day
- Azathioprine at less than 2mg/kg/day
- IVIG
- Etanercept, Certolizumab, Infliximab, Golimumab, Adalimumab

**Use with CAUTION in Breastfeeding**

Some medications must be used with caution while breastfeeding. Discuss with your Rheumatologist.

- Cyclosporine & Tacrolimus

**AVOID in Breastfeeding**

The following medications are NOT SAFE while breast feeding:

- Methotrexate
- Leflunomide
- Cyclophosphamide
- Mycophenolate
- There is not enough data on the safety of the following medications while breast feeding: Anakinra, Tocilizumab, Tofacitinib, Ustekinumab, Belimumab, Abatacept, Rituximab

**Medications & Breast Feeding**

The benefits of breastfeeding are important to both mother and baby. Not every medication poses a risk during breast feeding but some do. It is important to discuss with your doctor.

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