**Pregnancy Guidelines**

***Foods to Avoid During Pregnancy***

Eating well balanced meals is important at all times, but it is even more essential when you are pregnant. There are essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals that your developing baby needs. Most foods are safe; however, the following are best avoided during pregnancy.

**Raw Meat:** Uncooked seafood and rare or undercooked beef or poultry should be avoided because of the risk of contamination with coliform bacteria, toxoplasmosis, and salmonella.

**Deli Meat:** Deli meats have been known to be contaminated with listeria, which can cause miscarriage. Listeria has the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which may be life-threatening. If you are pregnant and you are considering eating deli meats, make certain that you reheat the meat until it is steaming.

**Fish with Mercury:** Fish that contain high levels of mercury should be avoided. Mercury consumed during pregnancy has been linked to developmental delays and brain damage. A sample of these types of fish include: shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish. Canned, chunk light tuna generally has a lower amount of mercury than other tuna, but still should only be eaten in moderation. Certain types of fish used in sushi should also be avoided due to high levels of mercury. Please see Mercury in Fish for specific types of fish and further information on how to calculate mercury levels.

**Smoked Seafood**: Refrigerated, smoked seafood often labeled as lox, nova style, kippered, or jerky should be avoided because it could be contaminated with Listeria. (These are safe to eat when they are in an ingredient in a meal that has been cooked, like a casserole.) This type of fish is often found in the deli section of your grocery store. Canned or shelf-safe smoked seafood is usually OK to eat.

**Fish Exposed to Industrial Pollutants:** Avoid fish from contaminated lakes and rivers that may be exposed to high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls. This is primarily for those who fish in local lakes and streams. These fish include: bluefish, striped bass, salmon, pike, trout, and walleye. Contact the local health department or Environmental Protection Agency to determine which fish are safe to eat in your area. Remember, this is regarding fish caught in local waters and not fish from your local grocery store.

**Raw Shellfish:** The majority of seafood-borne illness is caused by undercooked shellfish, which include oysters, clams, and mussels. Cooking helps prevent some types of infection, but it does not prevent the algae-related infections that are associated with red tides. Raw shellfish pose a concern for everybody, and they should be avoided altogether during pregnancy.

**Raw Eggs:** Raw eggs or any foods that contain raw eggs should be avoided because of the potential exposure to salmonella. Some homemade Caesar dressings, mayonnaise, homemade ice cream or custards, and Hollandaise sauces may be made with raw eggs.

If the recipe is cooked at some point, this will reduce the exposure to salmonella. Commercially manufactured ice cream, dressings, and eggnog are made with pasteurized eggs and do not increase the risk of salmonella. Restaurants should be using pasteurized eggs in any recipe that is made with raw eggs, such as Hollandaise sauce or dressings.

**Soft Cheeses:** Imported soft cheeses may contain bacteria called Listeria, which can cause miscarriage. Listeria has the ability to cross the placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which can be life-threatening. You would need to avoid soft cheeses such as: Brie, Camembert, Roquefort, Feta, Gorgonzola and Mexican style cheeses that include queso blanco and queso fresco, unless they clearly state that they are made from pasteurized milk. All soft non-imported cheeses made with pasteurized milk are safe to eat.

**Unpasteurized Milk:**  Unpasteurized milk may contain bacteria called listeria, which can cause miscarriage. Listeria has the ability to cross the Placenta and may infect the baby leading to infection or blood poisoning, which can be life-threatening. Make sure that any milk you drink is pasteurized.

**Pate:**  Refrigerated pate or meat spreads should be avoided because they may contain the bacteria listeria. Canned pate, or shelf-safe meat spreads can be eaten.

**Caffeine:** Although most studies show that caffeine intake in moderation is OK, there are others that show that caffeine intake may be related to miscarriages. Avoid caffeine during the first trimester to reduce the likelihood of a miscarriage. As a general rule, caffeine should be limited to fewer than 300 mg per day during pregnancy. Caffeine is a diuretic, which means it helps eliminate fluids from the body. This can result in water and calcium loss. It is important that you are drinking plenty of water, juice, and milk rather than caffeinated beverages. Some research shows that large amounts of caffeine are associated with miscarriage, premature birth, low birth weight, and withdrawal symptoms in infants. The safest thing is to refrain from consuming caffeine.

**Alcohol:** There is NO amount of alcohol that is known to be safe during pregnancy, and therefore alcohol should be avoided during pregnancy. Prenatal exposure to alcohol can interfere with the healthy development of the baby. Depending on the amount, timing, and pattern of use, alcohol consumption during pregnancy can lead to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or other developmental disorders. If you consumed alcohol before you knew you were pregnant, stop drinking now. You should continue to avoid alcohol during breastfeeding. Exposure of alcohol to an infant poses harmful risks, and alcohol does reach the baby during breastfeeding.

**Unwashed Vegetables:** Yes, vegetables are safe to eat, so you still need to eat them. However, it is essential to make sure they are washed to avoid potential exposure to toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis may contaminate the soil where the vegetables were grown.

**Reference:** <http://www.americanpregnancy.org.pregnancyhealth/foodstoavoid.html>

***Herbs Contraindicated for Mothers and Children during Pregnancy***

Herbs or other substances affecting normal or abnormal functions in the human body should not be used during pregnancy unless there is a known need for such agents.

Pregnancy is special time, when ordinary influences can have extraordinary consequences. Uterine contractions or significant changes in uterine tone can have disastrous effects, since carrying a baby to term necessitates stability. Alterations in uterine circulation may disrupt normal processes. Rapid System and organ growth is especially vulnerable to substances that interfere with cellular division. Abnormal hormonal influences may result in permanent developmental alterations.

Plants that have been used down through the centuries in treating women’s reproductive functions have demonstrated distinctive effects on the uterus. Those that enable the onset of menstruation are known as emmenogogues (E). Those herbs identified only as emmengagoues are contraindicated in early pregnancy but may be used later with caution. Those that have induced miscarriages are called abortifacients (A). The knowledge of these effects is through empirical observations and applications. If *in-vitro* or animal research has shown that plants cause uterine contractions, they are termed uterine stimulants (US). Plants acting as uterine stimulants that have been used empirically to enhance or speed labor are known as oxytocics (O). All of the above types of plants may disrupt pregnancy by expelling the embryo or fetus prematurely or by partially shearing the placenta from the uterus, leading to uterine haemorrhage and/or fetal, and possibly maternal, death. Certain uterine relaxants (UR) that empirically or through animal research have been shown to diminish spasms may also reduce uterine tone or interfere with effective labor.

Other plants can influence normal cellular reproduction. Substances that interfere with the mother’s hormonal balance or fetal genetic expression can disrupt fetal development. In the cases of gender-specific reproductive organs, plants shown in humans or animals to cause hormonal (H) changes may alter normal expression. Mutagens (M) and genotoxins (G) can likewise disturb normal growth as shown by *in vitro* studies. Teratogens (T) have been shown to interfere with normal development of particular structures, and plants with fetotoxins (F) endanger the very life of the developing child. In cases where these effects occur, birth defects are a possible unfortunate result.

In many cases parts of the plant itself or its extracts are known to have the above-mentioned effects, but in some instances only isolated components (C) of the plant have been shown to demonstrate a particular activity. In the cases where only an isolated constituent has shown activity, the use of the crude plant part or extract is probably safe in reasonable quantities. For some herbs no particular qualifying activity is given as a reason for their being listed here as contraindicated in pregnancy. When research is lacking, it is better to err on the side of caution.

*Herbs Contraindicated During Pregnancy*

Achyranthes root (Achyranthes bidentata, Achyranthes longifolia) E

Actaea racemosa rhizome

Adiantum capillus-veneris – herb

Agathosma betulina- leaf

Agathosma crenulata - leaf

Agathosma serratifolia – leaf

Alkanna tinctoria - root

Aloes dried leaf sap (Aloe spp.) E, A; G, M

Andrographis plant (Andrographis paniculata) A

Angelica plant, root (angelica archangelica) E

Angelica atropurpurea- fruit, root

Asafetida root (Ferula assa-foetida) Ec, A

Asclepias asperula - root

Ashwagandha root (Withania samnifera) A

Barberry root bark (Berberis vulgaris) USc

Basil plant (Ocimum basilicum) E; Mc

Beebalm plant (Monarda spp.) E; Mc

Beth root (Trillium erectum) E

Bloodroot rhizome (Sanguinaria Canadensis) US

Blue cohosh root (Caulophylbum thalictroides) A, E, USc

Blue flag roots/rhizome (Iris versicolor, Iris virginica)

Blue Iobelia plant (Lobelia siphilitica)

Boswelia sacra – gum resin

Boswelia serrata – gum resin

Buckthorn fruit (Rhamnus catharticus) G, M

Bugleweed leaves (Lycopus virginicus, Lycopus europaeus) H

California poppy plant (Eschscholzia californica) USc

Camphor tree bark (Cinnamomum camphora) Ec; Fc

Castor bean oil (Ricinus communis) E, A

Catharanthus rosea- herb

Cat’s claw root (Uncaria tomentosa) USc

Celandine root, plant (Chelidonium majus) US

Celery seeds or root (Apium graveolens) E, US, A

Chamomile, Roman flowers, (Chamaemelum nobile) E, A

Chervil plant (anthriscus cerefolium)

Chinese motherwort fruit, plant (Leonurus sibiricus) E

Chinese worm wood plant (Artemisia annua)

Chrysopogon zizanioides - root

Cinchona bark (Cinchona spp.) US, Oc, A; T, Fc

Cinnamomum aromaticum - bark

Cinnamon bark (Cinnamomum zeylanicum( E

Cinnamomum verum - bark

Coltsfoot leaves (Tussilago farfara) A, F

Comfrey root (Symphytum officinale) H, F

Coptis trifolia - rhizome

Corydalis rhizome (Corydalis yanhusuo) E; T

Cotton root bark (Gossypium herbaceum) E, O, A

Curculigo orchioides - rhizome

Cyathula root (Cyathula officinalis)

Dan shen roots (Salvia miltiorrhiza)

Dyer’s broom plant (Genista tinctoria) USc; Tc

European pennyroyal plant, essential oil (Mentha pulegium) E, A

Fenugreek seed (Trigonella foenum-graecum) E, US, A

Feverfew plant (Tanacetum parthenium) E

Goldenseal root/rhizome (Hydrastis Canadensis) USc

Goldthread rhizome (Coptis chinensis)E

Gotu kola plant (Centella asiatica) E

Horehound plant (Marrubium vulgare) E, US, A

Hyssop plant (Hyssopus officinalis) E, A

Jaborandi leaves (Pilocarpus jaborandi, Pilocarpus mircrophyllus, Pilocarpus pennatifolius) US; T

Job’s tears seeds (coix lacryma-jobi)

Jujube seeds (Ziziphus spinosa) E

Juniper berries, leaves (Juniperus spp.) E, US

Kava root (Piper methysticum) UR

Licorice root/rhizome (Glycyrrhiza glabra) E; H

Liverwort plant (Helpatica nobilis)

Lobelia plant, seeds (Lobelia inflata) UR

Lomatium root (Lomatium dissectum)

Long pepper fruit (Piper longum) A

Magnolia biondii – flower bud

Magnolia denudate – flower bud

Magnolia sprengeri – flower bud

Magnolia Virginian - bark

Magnolia bark (Magnolia officinalis)

Maidenhair fern plant (Adiantum pedatum)

Ming dang shen root (Changium smyrnoides)

Mistletoe plant (Viscum alhum) USc

Motherwort plant (Leonurus cardiaca) USc, E

Morinda citrifolia – fruit

Mucuna pruriens – root. seed

Mugwort plant (Artemisia vulgaris) E, USc, A

Myrrh gum-resin (Commiphora myrrha, Commiphora molmo, Commiphora madagascariensis, Commiphora wightii) E, A

Nard root (Nardostachy jatamansi) E

Nutmeg seeds (Myristica fragrans) A

Ocimum gratissimum – aboveground parts

Ocotillo stem (Fouquieria splendens)

Osha root (Ligusticum porterii, Ligusticum sinense, Ligusticum wallichii) E, A

Papaya fruit, latex (Carica papaya) E, A

Pennyroyal plant (Hedeoma pulegioides) E, A

Peony root bark (Paeonia suffruticosa)

Peppermint leaves (Mentha piperita) E

Phyllanthus amarus – aboveground parts, whole plant

Phyllanthus fraternus – aboveground parts, whole plant

Phyllanthus niruri – aboveground parts, whole plant

Pleurisy root (Asclepias tuberosa) US; H

Poleo herb (Hedeoma puleojioidis)

Polygala sibirica – root

Polygala tenuifolia - root

Pomegranate root bark (Punica granatum) E, US

Prickly ash bark (Zanthoxylum americanum, Zanthoxylum clava- hereulis, Zanthoxylum bungeanum, Zanthoxylum schinifolium, Zanthoxylum simulans) E

Psoralea seed (Cullen corylifolia = Psoralea corylifolia) A

Purslane plant (Portulaca oleracea)

Quassia bark (Picrasma excelsa)

Queen Ann’s lace seeds, leaves (Daucus carota) E, US, A

Rhubarb, Chinese root (Rheum palmatum, Rheum officinale, Rheum palmatum var. tanguticum) US; G, M

Rockweed thallus (Fucus spp.) H

Rosemary leaves (Rosemarinus officinalis) Ec, A

Ruda leaves (Ruta chalepensis) A

Rue leaves, unripe fruit (Ruta graveolens) E, USc, A

Safflower flower (Carthamus tinctorius) E, A

Saffron stigma, styles (Crocus sativus) E, A

Sage leaves, root (Salvia officinalis, Salvia miltiorrhiza) E, A

Sagebrush plant (Artemisia spp.) E, A

Sassafras bark \*(Sassafras albidum) E

Scouring rush plant (Equisetum hyemale)

Seaweed thallus (Laminarisa spp.) H

Senega root (Polygala senega) US

Shepherd’s purse plant (Capsella bursa-pastoris) E, US, A

Silk tree bark (Albizia julibrissin,) E, A

Southernwood plant (Artemisia abrotanum) E

Spigelia marilandica - root

Spikenard rhizome (Aralia spp.)

Surinam quassia bark (Quassia amara)

Symphytum asperum – leaf, root

Symphytum x uplandicum – leaf, root

Szechuan lovage rhizome (Ligusticum chuanxlong = Ligusticum wallichii,Ligusticum porteri)

Szechuan pepper fruit rind (Zanthoxylum bungeanum)

Tansy plant (Tanacetum vulgare) E, USc, A

Taxus brevifolia – needles

Terminalia arjuna - bark

Thuja leaves (Thuja occidentalis) E, Ac

Thyme leaves (Thymus spp.) E

Tree peony bark (Paeonia suffruticosa)

Tribulus terrestris – aboveground parts, fruit

Tussilago farfara – flower bud

Vervain plant (Verbena hastate, Verbena officinalis) E

Wild indigo root (Baptisia tinctoria)

Wormwood tops, leaves (Artemisia absinthium) E, USc, A

Yohimbe bark (Pausinystalia johimbe) UR; Fc

Zedoary rhizome (Curcuma zedoaria)

***Herbs Contraindicated For Mothers and Children during Nursing***

Alkanna tinctoria – root

Aloe ferox – latex

Aloe perryi – latex

Aloe vera – latex

Artemisia absinthium – herb

Chelidonium majus – herb

Euonymus atropurpureus – root bark

Eutrochium fistulosum – herb, rhizome, root

Eutrochium maculatum – herb, rhizome, root

Eutrochium purpureum – herb, rhizome, root

Frangula alnus – bark

Frangula purshiana – bark

Hedeoma pulegioides – herb

Lycopus americanus – herb

Lycopus virginicus – herb

Mentha pulegium – essential oil. Herb

Pausinystalia johimbe – bark

Piper methysticum – rhizome, root

Rhamnus cathartica – fruit

Rheum palmatum – rhizome, root

Rheum palmatum var. tanguticum – rhizome, root

Symphytum asperum – leaf, root

Symphytum officinale – leaf, root

Symphytum x uplandicum – leaf, root

Tanacetum vulgare – herb

Thuja occidentalis – leaf

Tussilago farfara – flower bud, leaf

* If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your Naturopathic Doctor.