



TRAVEL DURING PREGNANCY

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends the following for travel during pregnancy.

When is the best time to travel during pregnancy?

The best time to travel is probably the middle of your pregnancy - between weeks 14 and 28. Most common pregnancy emergencies usually happen in the first and third trimesters. After 28 weeks, it may be harder for you to move around or sit for a long time.

What should I know about planning long car trips during pregnancy?

During a car trip, make each day's drive brief. Try to limit driving to no more than 5 or 6 hours each day. Be sure to wear your seat belt every time you ride in a motor vehicle, even if your car has an air bag. Plan to make frequent stops to move around and stretch your legs.

What should I know about airplane travel while pregnant?

Some domestic airlines restrict travel during the last month of pregnancy or require a medical certificate; others discourage travel after 36 weeks of pregnancy. If you are planning an international flight, the cutoff point for traveling with international airlines is often earlier.

When traveling by air, you can take the following steps to help make your trip as comfortable as possible:

- If you can, book an aisle seat, so that it is easy to get up and stretch your legs during a long flight.
- Avoid gas-producing foods and carbonated drinks before your flight.
- Wear your seatbelt at all times. The seatbelt should be belted low on the hipbones, below your belly.
- If you are prone to nausea, your healthcare provider may be able to prescribe anti-nausea medication.

What should I know when planning a trip on a ship during pregnancy?

It may be a good idea, just in case, to ask your healthcare provider about which medications are safe for you to carry along to calm seasickness. Seasickness bands are useful for some people, although there is little scientific evidence that they work. These bands use acupressure to help ward off an upset stomach.

Another concern for cruise ship passengers is the norovirus infection. Noroviruses are a group of viruses that can cause severe nausea and vomiting for one or two days. They are very contagious and can spread rapidly throughout cruise ships. People can become infected by eating food, drinking liquids or touching surfaces that are contaminated with the virus. Before you book a cruise, you may want to check whether your ship has passed a health and safety inspection conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

What health care preparations should I make before traveling while pregnant?

If you are traveling in the United States, locate the nearest hospital or medical clinic in the place you are visiting. If you are traveling internationally, the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IAMAT) has a worldwide directory of doctors. The doctors in the country you are visiting may not speak English, so bring a dictionary of the language spoken with you. Another tip is to register with an American embassy or consulate after you arrive at your destination. These agencies may be helpful if you need to leave the country because of an emergency.

**If you have further questions, contact
your obstetrician-gynecologist.**

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