

Herbs in Pregnancy and Lactation

Some herbs are beneficial in pregnancy, while others are best avoided. It is important to remember that herbs can be powerful drugs in some cases and should be used with discretion, or not at all during pregnancy. Some herbs can stimulate pelvic circulation (or over-stimulate), simulate hormonal production or have adverse effects on the uterus. This is not a complete list. Please consult your midwife, nurse or physician if you have a specific question.

Considered Safe in Pregnancy and Lactation

Ginger: may be helpful for morning sickness

Evening Primrose oil: useful in the last month of pregnancy

Fennel: can increase secretion of breast-milk

Fenugreek: can increase secretion of breast-milk

Papaya enzyme: may be useful in decreasing nausea in early pregnancy

Peppermint: may be useful in decreasing nausea in early pregnancy

Echinacea: reported safe in recommended doses

Avoid in Pregnancy: some of these herbs may be safe, however little evidence is available to assure safety.

Aloe Vera

Black/Blue Cohosh (sometimes used post-dates to stimulate labor)

Dong Quai

Feverfew

Goldenseal

Kava Kava

Ma-Huang (Ephedra)

Raspberry Leaf: avoid in 1st trimester (uterine stimulant)

St. Johnswort (uterine stimulant)

Pennyroyal

Artemisia's