

Medication during pregnancy: What you need to know

Throughout your pregnancy – from fertilization until birth – your baby continually develops. During the **first trimester**, called the **embryonic period**, each organ begins to form. The **second trimester** marks the beginning of the **fetal period**, during which the organs will continue to develop and become fully functional. During these essential development phases, the embryo and fetus are **particularly vulnerable**. Certain very frequently used medicines may have an adverse affect on the baby's development and should generally be avoided during pregnancy¹. Two types of drugs can be distinguished: teratogens, which can cause embryo malformations, and fetotoxic drugs, which can harm fetal growth, maturation and organ function. Exposure to certain medicines at the end of the pregnancy or during delivery can also result in neonatal effects¹.

Talking with your healthcare professionals and carefully following their recommendations is all the more crucial if you suffer from an acute or chronic condition. Special care must also be taken to avoid exposure to certain chemical substances, known as **endocrine disruptors**², commonly found in the environment (pesticides) and in everyday products such as cosmetics, toothpaste and hair colorants. Exposure to these substances can have harmful consequences on the healthy hormonal development of the fetus³. Nevertheless, exposure can be easily avoided through greater vigilance and, if necessary, by changing your personal habits. Favoring natural cosmetics and food that has not been treated with pesticides, and, most importantly, heeding your doctor's advice are good practices that should be applied throughout your pregnancy.

¹ <http://ansm.sante.fr/Dossiers/Medicaments-et-grossesse/Medicaments-et-grossesse/%28offset%29/0>

² <https://www.anses.fr/fr/content/les-perturbateurs-endocriniens>

³ <http://presse.inserm.fr/alerte-sur-les-melanges-de-perturbateurs-endocriniens-pendant-la-grossesse/29138/>