

## Safety In Pregnancy

### Falls and accidents

If you fall, don't become overly concerned. Chances are good that the baby will be safe in your uterus, and the amniotic fluid will cushion your baby from harm. Just to be careful, let your provider know. We may want you to come in for an evaluation. After a fall, if you have severe abdominal pain, contractions, bleeding, leaking of fluid from the vagina or a decrease in baby movement, call us immediately. If the fall or accident involved trauma to your abdomen, your provider may order an ultrasound or may want to monitor your baby for a while to rule out complications.

### Household considerations

**Cleaning products:** Strong odors and fumes can cause dizziness and make nausea worse. Avoid strong cleaning products while pregnant. Less toxic products are available, and simple things like baking soda and vinegar make great cleansers. When cleaning, be sure to have the area well ventilated.

**Insect repellants:** DEET is often used in insect repellants. DEET has been associated with toxic encephalopathy in children, which causes problems in the way the brain works. We know this pesticide is toxic in large doses, but we have limited information. We advise you to use little or no DEET.

**Litter box:** Because you could get the infection toxoplasmosis, we recommend you do not change litter boxes. Also, when gardening, be sure to wear gloves and wash your hands well for this same reason.

**Painting:** As with cleaning products, fumes from fresh paint, varnish, turpentine, formaldehyde or

carpet glue can be toxic and cause dizziness. Avoid these fumes for 48 hours after application. If you paint, use latex based paint, work in a well ventilated area and leave the area for frequent breaks. As a precaution, wait until you are out of the first trimester to do any painting.

**Sun exposure:** Sensitivity to the sun increases during pregnancy. Watch your exposure and use sunscreens. Prolonged sunbathing can raise your body temperature to unhealthy levels. Overheating also can cause dehydration.

**Whirlpools/Saunas/Hot tubs:** Use caution with saunas, hot tubs and whirlpools. They could raise your body temperature. Studies suggest that women whose core body temperatures rise significantly during the early weeks of pregnancy stand an increased risk of miscarriage or a baby with a neural tube defect (spina bifida, for example).

It is generally accepted that problems may occur if the mother's temperature rises above 102 degrees Fahrenheit (about 39 degrees Celsius) for more than 10 minutes during the first seven weeks of pregnancy.

Common sense recommendations for saunas, hot tubs and whirlpools are to:

- Use for less than 10 minutes
- Use after the first trimester
- Keep body temperature below 102 degrees Fahrenheit