

## Traveling While Pregnant

### General travel advice

Travel is not recommended for some women with pregnancy complications or certain medical conditions. **Talk to your provider if you are considering travel.**

If your provider feels it is safe for you to travel, it will probably be the most comfortable for you during the second trimester. In pregnancy, riding for a length of time may become uncomfortable and you will need to stop more often to stretch and for bathroom breaks. During the last few weeks of your pregnancy, you may not want to travel far, in case you would go into labor.

Discuss any long-distance trips with your provider ahead of time. If you are planning on traveling a long distance or will be gone for a while, you may want to take a copy of your medical records with you. Having this information will be of help should you need medical care while you are gone.

### Seat belts

Continue to wear a seat belt during your pregnancy. As your belly grows, you will need to adjust the lap belt to fit *under* your pregnant abdomen or across your thighs so it is snug and comfortable. Seat belts worn too loosely or too high on the abdomen can cause broken ribs or injury to your abdomen. Put the shoulder belt between your breasts and across your shoulder. In most accidents, the baby recovers quickly from the seat belt pressure. However, even after a mild accident, it is recommended to consult with your provider or seek medical attention as soon as possible.

### Air bags

When you are driving, point the steering wheel towards your face, not your abdomen. Keep your belly at least 12 inches away from the wheel.

### Airline travel

Commercial airlines have pressurized cabins. We do

not recommend flights without pressurized cabins. Check with the airlines about their policies on pregnant passengers. Most will allow flying until about 36 weeks. Metal detectors at airport security are not harmful. As a pregnant passenger, you can request a hand or wand security search rather than the use of a body scanner.

### Travel outside of the country

If you are considering a trip outside of the country while pregnant, discuss this with your provider in advance to ensure a safe trip.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a Traveler's Health Hotline for information on disease and world travel, (800-CDC-INFO).

Checklist for the pregnant traveler:

- Make sure health insurance is valid while abroad and during pregnancy. Check to see if your policy covers a newborn should delivery take place. Obtain a supplemental travel insurance policy and a prepaid medical evacuation policy.
- Check medical facilities at the destination.
- Determine beforehand whether prenatal care will be required abroad and, if so, who will provide it.
- Check ahead of time whether blood is screened for HIV and hepatitis B at the destination. Pregnant travelers and companions should know their blood types.
- Check facilities at the destination for availability of safe food and beverages including bottled water and pasteurized milk.
- Avoid fresh fruit and vegetables unless they have been cooked or peeled.
- Stay away from raw or undercooked meat. It can contain organisms that can cause infection.