



Toxicity of Herbs in Pregnancy

As a general rule, use of medicinal (doses of) herbs is not recommended in the first trimester (12 weeks) of pregnancy, as this is the most sensitive time for the developing fetus. The following are plants whose actions include stimulation of the uterus (to contract), induction of the menstrual flow (emmenegogus), and for ability to cause a pregnancy to abort by these and other means. In addition, a few are teratogenic (cause deformities) or poisonous at any time if taken internally. Still others (*) have been used in pregnancy tea formulas in small amounts as toners, sometimes throughout pregnancy. Homeopathic remedies are prepared differently and are not contraindicated, *per se*, in pregnancy.

The *used with caution in pregnancy* list refers to plants which may be used occasionally, in small amounts, as mildly flavored beverage teas or culinary seasonings. Extracts of all of these plants, even in small (2-4 drops) doses, should be avoided, however, especially in the first trimester. The second list includes plants which are not safe in the first trimester but which later may be used in moderation when prescribed properly. The final list of herbs *strictly contraindicated in pregnancy* is in two parts, primarily for ease of use. The first half is made up of plants frequently used in general practice; the second half is plants less commonly used.

Nontoxic Herbs to be Used with Caution in Pregnancy:

Allium sativa	garlic	Linera usitatissimum	flax (oil lots)
Allium cepa	onion	Mentha spicata	spearmint
Apium graveolens	celery	Myristica fragrans	nutmeg
Armoracia lapathifolia	horseradish	Nasturtium officianalis	watercress
Artemesia dracunuclus	tarragon	Ocymum basilicum	basil
Beta vulgaris	beet	Origanum vulgare	oregano
Brassica spp.	broccoli, cabbage	Origanum magorana	marjoram
Capsicum frutescens	cayenne	Petroselinum sativa	parsley
Caryophyllus aromaticus	cloves	Piper nigra	black pepper
Carica papaya	papaya	Prunus persica	peach seed
Carum carvi	caraway	Punica granatum	pomegranate
Cichorum intybus	chicory	Rosemarium officianalis	rosemary
Cinnamomum zeylanicum	cinnamon	Satureja hortensis	savory
Crocus sativa	saffron	Silybum marianum	milkthistle
Daucus carota	carrots	Thymus vulgaris	thyme
Equisetum arverse	horsetail	Trigonellum foenumgraecum	fenugreek
Ferula asafoetida	buckwheat	Uticus fulva	slippery elm
Foeniculum vulgare	fennel	Zingiber officianale	ginger

Herbs Contraindicated in the First Trimester of Pregnancy:
Use later, as indicated, for a short time, in doses well below the therapeutic maximum.

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	yarrow	<i>Commiphora myrrha</i>	myrrh
<i>Angelica</i> spp.	angelica, don quai	<i>dioecorea</i> spp.	wild yam
<i>Anthemis nobilis</i>	chamomile (Roman)	<i>Ephedra sinica</i>	Ma huang, mormon tea
<i>Arctium lappa</i>	Burdock	<i>Glycyrriza glabra</i>	licorice
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	bearberry	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>	hops
<i>Artemesia vulgaris</i>	mugwort	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	hyssop
<i>Barosma betulina</i>	buchu	<i>Lavandula officinalis</i>	lavender
<i>Calendula officianalis</i>	calendula	<i>Leonurus cardiaca</i>	motherwort
<i>Caulophyllum thalic.</i>	blue cohosh	<i>Levisticum officianalis</i>	lovage
<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	black cohosh	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	horehound
<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i>	chamomile	<i>Prunus s</i>	wild blkcherry
<i>medicago sativa</i>	alfalfa	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	wild cherry
<i>Melissa officianalis</i>	balm	<i>Silybum marianum</i>	milkthistle
<i>Mentha piperita</i>	peppermint	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	thyme
<i>Passiflora incarnata</i>	passionflower	<i>Verbena officianalis</i>	vervain
<i>Plantago</i> spp.	plantain		

Commonly Used Herbs Strictly Contraindicated in Pregnancy

<i>Aletris farinosa*</i>	blazingstar, stargrass	<i>Nicotiana tabacum</i>	tobacco
<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	aloe	<i>Panax ginseng</i>	ginseng (Chinese)
<i>Anemone pulsatilla</i>	pulsatilla	<i>Papaver somniferum</i>	opium poppy
<i>Areca catechu</i>	betel nut	<i>Petroselinum sativa</i>	parsley (seed)
<i>Aristolochia clematitis</i>	birthwort		Peyote
<i>Arnica Montana</i>	arnica	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Poke
<i>Artemesia absinthium</i>	wormwood	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>	mandrake
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	barberry	<i>Rauwolfia serpentina</i>	rauwolfia
<i>Coffea arabica</i>	coffee	<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>	buckthorn
<i>Capsella bursapastoris</i>	shepherd's purse	<i>Rheum palmatum</i>	Turkey rhubarb
<i>Cassia acutifolia</i>	senna	<i>Rhus glabra</i>	sumac, berry
<i>Caphalis ipecacuanha</i>	ipecac	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor bean, oil
<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	celandine	<i>Ruta graveolens</i>	rue
<i>Claviceps purpura</i>	ergot	<i>Senguinaria canadensis</i>	bloodroot
<i>Erythoxylon coca</i>	cocaine	<i>Santalum album</i>	sandalwood
<i>Ferula asafoetida</i>	asafoetida	<i>Sarothamnus scoparius</i>	broom
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>	yellow jasmine	<i>Sassafras albigum</i>	sassafras
<i>Gossypium</i> spp.	cotton	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	life root
<i>Heracleum lavatum</i>	cow parsnip	<i>Symplocarpus foetida</i>	skunk cabbage
<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	goldenseal	<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>	feverfew
<i>Hydrocotyle asiatica</i>	gotu cola	<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	tansy
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St. John's wort	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	red cedar

<i>Juniperus communis</i>	juniper	<i>Trillium pendulum</i>	beth root
<i>Ledum palustre</i>	marsh tea	<i>Tunera</i> sp.	damiana
<i>Lomatium dissectum</i>		<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	coltsfoot
<i>Ligusticum porteri</i>	osha	<i>Viscum album</i>	mistletoe
<i>Mentha pulegium</i>	pennyroyal		

Herbs Strictly Contraindicated in Pregnancy (Less Commonly Used)

<i>Acorus calamus</i>	sweet flag	<i>Helleborus niger</i>	black hellebore
<i>Agave americana</i>	agave	<i>Jateorrhiza palmata</i>	calumba
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	pleurisy root	<i>Menispermum canadensis</i>	moonseed
<i>Bayera anthelmintica</i>	kousso	<i>Pilocarpus jaborandi</i>	jaborandi
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	camphor	<i>Pinus palustris</i>	yellow pine, turpentine
<i>Citrullus colocynthus</i>	bitter apple	<i>Polygala senega</i>	senega
<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	meadow saffron	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	knot grass
<i>Croton tiglium</i>	croton oil	<i>veratrum</i> sp.	hellebore
<i>Dryopteris filixmas</i>	male fern	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	leptandra
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	rose of china	<i>Vinca rosa</i>	periwinkle