

Fact sheet

Airline travel during pregnancy

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There may be many reasons why you want to travel while pregnant, such as a last minute holiday before baby arrives, work commitments or visiting family.

Here are some things you will need to know before making any travel plans.

It is usually quite safe to fly during the first and second trimester of your pregnancy. However, it is important to check with your doctor before booking any trips, especially if you have had any medical problems during your pregnancy, such as;

- previous early (premature) birth
- spotting
- high blood pressure
- diabetes

In most cases your doctor will need to give you medical clearance and a medical certificate, which you can provide to the airline if requested. Some Airlines will request that you provide these no matter how far along in your pregnancy you are, it's better to check with them first.

If your pregnancy is healthy and there are no medical problems, you can fly without any restrictions up to 28 weeks gestation. Most women find travelling between 14 to 28 weeks easier, as morning sickness may be behind them and their energy levels are higher.

Vaccinations

Some destinations require that you have certain vaccinations before travelling to them. You will need to check if these are needed and if safe to give in pregnancy. It is better to do this before you book your flight or holiday.

Travel restrictions during pregnancy.

When you are booking your trip, advise the travel agent about your pregnancy and check the policy of the airline before you book. It would be terrible if you booked a flight only to be turned away at the gate!

For domestic travel under four hours, if there are no complications in your pregnancy and you are carrying a single baby you may not have any restrictions at all, but it is always good to check with airline first.

For international flights, some airlines are unwilling to carry women who are more than 28 weeks due to the risk of premature labour (early birth). However, if your pregnancy is uncomplicated, you can fly up to 36 weeks with a single pregnancy and up to 32 weeks with twins.

Tips for flying while pregnant.

- Keep up your water intake, to avoid dehydration.
- Try to get up and move around when you can and wear properly fitted DVT stockings. During pregnancy you have an increased risk of DVT (deep vein thrombosis).
- Try to book an aisle seat to make it easier for you to get up.
- Wear your seatbelt low around your pelvis.
- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Try to do some stretches in your seat. Flexing your feet up and down and rotating the ankles.
- Ensure you have booked travel insurance, especially now you are pregnant. It is best to be covered in case of an emergency.

We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

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