

Pregnancy / Environmental Hotline

1-800-322-5014 or 1-781-466-8474

Monday – Friday 9am – 4:30pm

The Pregnancy/Environmental Hotline is a telephone information service which offers pregnant women and their partners' practical information about exposures to medications and drugs, chemicals, x-rays, infections, and possible risks during pregnancy. The hotline is part of the National Birth Defects Center and is staffed by health educators who have special training to address concerns about environmental hazards to pregnancy. Doctors who specialize in genetics and birth defects oversee the hotline.

All calls are confidential and free of charge.

COMMON QUESTIONS ARE:

●CAN THAT GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE I HAD ON NEW YEAR'S EVE AFFECT MY PREGNANCY?

Though it is not recommended that pregnant women drink alcoholic beverages, small amounts of alcohol taken very rarely such as a glass of champagne are not expected to be harmful. Regular, high dose drinking should be avoided during pregnancy due to risk of birth defects and mental retardation to your baby.

●CAN I HAVE MY HAIR DYED OR PERMED DURING MY PREGNANCY?

Though we know of no harmful effects from hair treatments, it is suggested to wait until the first trimester (first 12 weeks) is over before having the hair dyed or permed. Some of the chemicals in these processes are strong and can be absorbed into the bloodstream when applying them to the scalp.

●I TOOK A COLD MEDICATION WHEN I WAS TWO MONTHS ALONG. IS THAT HARMFUL?

Some over-the-counter cold medications can be taken in moderate amounts, if necessary. Check with one of our providers about taking a single ingredient cold medication to treat your individual symptoms.

●CAN THE CHEMICALS AT MY WORKPLACE CAUSE PROBLEMS DURING PREGNANCY?

Certain chemicals and other agents may pose risks to the fetus. Contact the hotline with specific chemical names for information.

●IS IT SAFE TO REFINISH AND PAINT THE BABY'S ROOM WHEN I AM EXPECTING?

It is generally felt that pregnant women should avoid this task. Some chemicals in paints and refinishers can be toxic and are not very well studied for use in pregnancy.

●MY PARTNER WORKS WITH LEAD, CAN THAT MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO GET PREGNANT?

High levels of lead in the blood can lower sperm count and make it more difficult to become pregnant. A blood lead level can check this.

●CHICKEN POX IS GOING AROUND AT THE SCHOOL WHERE I WORK. MY DUE DATE IS NEXT WEEK. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you have already had Chicken Pox, you cannot get it again and do not need to worry. If you have never had Chicken Pox, contact the Hotline or one of our providers for more information.