

Pointers For Moms-to-Be

Taking Medicines? Talk to Your Doctor, Read Labels

(NAPSA)—Pregnant? Planning to become pregnant? Breastfeeding? During this exciting time, you probably have a lot of questions and maybe even some concerns, like whether it is okay for you to take certain medicines or dietary supplements.

“It is important for women to know that prescription and non-prescription medicines and dietary supplements can be passed from a pregnant woman to her unborn child and can also pass through breast milk,” says Robert G. Donovan, president of the Council on Family Health (CFH). “Women who are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding should talk with a health care professional before taking any medicines or dietary supplements.”

CFH and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently launched a public service announcement campaign to help educate women about the safe use of medicines and dietary supplements before, during and after pregnancy.

CFH reminds women that their doctor should advise them as to whether a medicine or dietary supplement is safe to use during this special time and also offers these other tips:

- If your doctor says you may take a nonprescription medicine, always remember to read the label and pay special attention to the usage directions and warnings. If you have questions, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

- Medicines may have different effects during different times in a pregnancy.

- Safe amounts of medicines or



If you're breastfeeding, pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant, health experts recommend you talk with your doctor before taking any medicines or supplements.

dietary supplements for an adult woman may not be suitable for her unborn or nursing baby.

- Doctors may recommend certain supplements, such as prenatal vitamins or iron supplements, before, during or after pregnancy.

- Studies have shown that adding folic acid to the diet of women of childbearing age, even before pregnancy begins, may greatly reduce the chance of some birth defects.

Your baby is counting on you. Care enough to read the medicine label. Go to your prenatal check-ups, and stay in close communication with your health care professional throughout your pregnancy and while you are breastfeeding.

A tip sheet—“New Moms and Moms-to-Be, Someone is Counting on You”—can be found on CFH’s web site www.cfhinfo.org (go to “publications and tip sheets” section). For a Spanish-language version of the tip sheet, go to the “En Español” section of www.cfhinfo.org.