



## Flying During Pregnancy

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### Is flying safe during pregnancy?

- Generally, occasional travel by air is considered safe for most pregnant women
- Risks associated with noise, turbulence, and radiation exposure have all been reported to be below the levels thought to be harmful

### Is flying safe for *me* during pregnancy?

- Maybe, depending on your circumstances
  - Conditions affecting the mother, such as preeclampsia, hypertension, diabetes, epilepsy, for example, or
  - Conditions affecting the risk of preterm birth, such as vaginal bleeding, shortened cervix, or preterm labor, or
  - Conditions affecting the baby, such as birth defects
  - Any of these issues may make flying risky enough that your doctors and midwives will advise you have a staycation instead.
- These circumstances are individual and decisions should be made only based upon the specifics of your pregnancy



## What can I do to fly smart and stay comfortable?

- Wear your seatbelt. It goes across your hips and under your belly.
- Avoid drinking sodas and other carbonated drinks. If you feel uncomfortable, gassy, or constipated now, when you are up in the sky, those bubbles can expand and make it much worse.
- Bring your medications in your carry on bag. If you take medication for nausea, you will want it to be close by in case you feel sick.

## Can I go on my trip?

- Your OB, midwife, or MFM specialist can help you decide based upon your individual situation.
- Check with your airline, as they have different requirements to approve your flight.
  - After 36 weeks, many airlines will not allow you to fly
  - Some airlines have other restrictions or requirements
- Remember to check with your final destination as well. For example, Disney Cruise Line does not allow travelers who are past a certain gestational age, usually 24 weeks
- If you are an airline crew member, check with your agencies and employers to ensure you are following their guidelines as well.
- Consider your destination before you go. In the unlikely event that you have a complication while you are there, is there a hospital nearby with maternity and newborn services? Briefly research local hospitals in your area so you know where you would go if you have any bleeding, contractions, or other issues.
- If you are advised not to travel or not allowed to travel, please remember that your and your baby's safety are the top priority and that airlines have many people to manage. No one wants to have their vacation memory tainted by someone delivering a baby at cruising altitude.

