

PREGNANCY AND HERBAL FORMULAS

Herbs and herbal formulations have been used throughout history in all aspects of female reproductive health, and have been used across many cultures to strengthen, tonify and support during pregnancy. Traditionally pregnancies were handled by midwives or other “wise women” and were not considered a “medical condition.” Since the rise of mainstream medicine, we have seen a shift from this traditional pattern to pregnancies monitored and even controlled by physicians. As this trend has grown there has been much confusion and misinformation regarding the use of herbs during pregnancy, and much of what is currently advised could be considered unnecessarily overcautious.

There are a couple factors to consider when determining if an herb or formula is appropriate; including the intended action of the herb, the part of the plant used, and the actual percentage of the specific herb in the overall formulation. Many cases of contraindications you will find regard the entire herb, when it is only a specific part that is not recommended during pregnancy. Likewise, many herbs are contraindicated at high doses only, yet you will see this contraindication applied to a formula containing a very small percentage per dose of that specific herb—when that herb at lower doses has a healing or tonic effect.

Finally, many herbs are listed as “not recommended during pregnancy” not because any adverse effects were ever noted with their use, but simply because no information on the safety can be “conclusively established.” In other words, a particular herb that may have been used during pregnancy throughout the ages, will be deemed “not recommended” or not safe because there has not been a study performed in the last 20 years.

The following recommendations for Dr. Morse’s Cellular Botanicals and Dr. Morse’s Handcrafted Botanical formulas have been established based on traditional use, current research (that we consider accurate and reliable), and Dr. Morse’s nearly 50 years of herbal expertise. Dr. Morse’s formulas are superb herbal formulas to cleanse, regenerate and strengthen the tissues of the body, restoring your health and vitality. However, we do suggest avoiding or using caution with some formulas during pregnancy (see below).

If you are pregnant, we do not recommend a deep detox until your little one is born. Focus instead on using food to hydrate and cleanse! There are some situations that may require detoxification using herbal formulas during pregnancy, and in these cases, we suggest meeting with a counselor for personalized guidance.

Should you choose to work with our formulas while pregnant, please take the following lists into consideration. We always recommend our Superfood Blend and Fruit Magic formulas during pregnancy for an excellent prenatal formula, the Bone and Connective Tissue Support for parathyroid support and proper calcium utilization, and a kidney formula to support proper lymphatic filtration.

Herbs are a very safe way to support a healthy pregnancy, when used properly and with common sense. If you are unsure or uncomfortable with an herb or herbal formula, consult a knowledgeable counselor, midwife or herbalist, or consider your body’s innate wisdom. And remember you can always choose not to use an herbal formula while you’re pregnant. But you should not avoid herbs out of fear or misinformation!

Recommended to use caution during early pregnancy

Lymph Drainage Daily
Lymph Drainage Gentle Mover
Lymph Level #1
Lymph Level #2
Lung Detox
Lungs
GI Gentle Mover
GI Moderate Mover
Bowels #2
Bowels #3
Bowels #4
Bowels #5

Not recommended for use during pregnancy

Bleeding
Parasite General
Parasites
Dewormer
Strong Heart
Heart Health
Lymph Drainage Moderate Mover
Lymph Drainage Super Mover
Lymph Level #3
Lymph Level #4
Lymph Level #5

Not recommended for use during breastfeeding

Fungal Balance
Parasite General
Parasite Micro
Parasites
Dewormer
Strong Heart
Heart Health
Heal All Herbal Blend (from Dr. Morse's original line)

SPECIAL NOTE: LYMPHATIC AND GI / BOWEL FORMULAS

Due to the astringent nature of these formulas, use caution during pregnancy: Lymph Drainage Daily, Lymph Drainage Gentle Mover, Lymph Level #1, Lymph Level #2, GI Gentle Mover, GI Moderate Mover, Bowels #2, Bowels #3, Bowels #4, and Bowels #5

Generally, any herbs with stimulant laxative properties are contraindicated during pregnancy due to concerns of stimulating uterine contractions. Recent research has shown that some stimulant laxatives (Cascara Sagrada and Cape Aloe included), have shown no adverse effects on pregnancy or fetus when used according to the recommended doses. We consider the GI and Bowel formulas safe for use during pregnancy when used as recommended (and with common sense). Always start with the lowest possible dose and strength (see our website for choosing the right Bowel formula for you) and increase gradually as needed. If breastfeeding, simply keep an eye on your baby's stools. If you observe baby's stools becoming more frequent or too runny, decrease or discontinue the bowel formula.

The stronger, pulling formulas are not recommended during entire pregnancy. This includes Lymph Drainage Moderate Mover, Lymph Drainage Super Mover, Lymph Level #3, #4, and #5 formulas.

FEMALE BALANCE TONIC / FEMALE SYSTEM: FRIEND OR FOE?

These formulas are tonics and strengtheners and can be very beneficial both before and during pregnancy when used as directed. They are not estrogenic formulas!

WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL?

If the taste bothers you or you prefer not to use alcohol tinctures, consider capsule or glycerin versions instead, or you can "burn off" the alcohol by adding your tinctures to a bit of simmering water and letting the mixture cool prior to taking them.

LACTATION HERBS

While many herbs work to increase or decrease breast milk production, we have found two that work well in most cases. To stop breast milk production, Black Walnut Hull can be a safe, quick and effective method.

If breast milk supply is not starting off very well or decreases before you are ready to stop breastfeeding, Fenugreek is very helpful at recovering a dwindling supply. Capsules are generally the best form, and they typically need to be consumed consistently and in what seems like very large doses (generally 4-5 capsules, five or six times per day, sometimes more, until supply returns to normal).

Note: The pituitary gland makes prolactin, the hormone necessary for breast milk production. If herbs seem to barely work, or do not work at all, you may need to look at and address a pituitary weakness.