



Advice from Dr. Weiss

Q My wife is in her first trimester and we want to travel by plane to our home country and stay for three weeks. The flight takes seven hours. She'll be nine weeks when we travel. Is this OK?

A Air travel is quite safe in pregnancy, but there are a few considerations during the first trimester. The high hormone levels in pregnancy increase the blood's ability to clot. To lessen the risk, I would recommend buying plenty of water once you're past security so your wife can stay well hydrated during the flight. Every hour, she should get up and take a short walk or move her legs around in her seat to keep her circulation active. Another consideration is that your wife could miscarry: Though the risk is only about 1 in 7, I would think twice about going anywhere without modern health care.

Stephen H. Weiss, M.D., is an assistant professor in the department of gynecology and obstetrics at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta.



Doula Jill says

Q The same week I got laid off, I learned that I'm pregnant. I wanted this pregnancy, but my company's downsizing was totally out of the blue. We're feeling really stressed, when most couples would just be feeling joyous. Are there any resources you can recommend?

A Fortunately, there are some really great community programs for which you might be eligible. Many of

them are income dependent, but spend some time making phone calls and getting information. It's one of the first strategies for empowering yourselves in a challenging economic time. Consider it your homework!

My first suggestion is Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), a free program that sends a nurse to your home once a week starting in the second trimester. After your delivery, the visits continue for the first two years of the baby's life. In my doula practice, I highly recommend this program because it's national in scope and has demonstrated success (you may have heard President Obama mention it!). Check it out at nursefamilypartnership.org.

My second recommendation is Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). A federally funded program under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), it offers nutrition classes, breastfeeding support, and food vouchers to expectant mothers, new moms, and their children. You don't have to be the one out of work; my sister's husband was laid off when she was 36 weeks and she accessed WIC support right away. The easiest way to apply is to call your state WIC office listed on the USDA website, usda.gov.

Your pediatrician, ob/gyn or midwife, and municipal health department should have local contacts for you, too. It may take some phone calls to find the correct method to sign up for assistance programs, so be patient and write down the names of the people you speak with as you go. It's worth your effort to qualify.

Jill Wodnick, M.A., (jillwodnick.com) is a certified doula, prenatal instructor, and owner of Montclair Maternity, a New Jersey childbirth education center.



Ask Dr. Dana

Q I love my nightly glass of wine. I haven't had anything to drink during this pregnancy, but I'm due in three months, and I've heard that the baby is pretty well developed now and that an occasional glass of wine is fine. Is it OK?

A I don't recommended that you drink wine during pregnancy. When an expecting mother has alcohol, it's transmitted to her unborn fetus and can cause damage at any time, even the third trimester. Alcohol can lead to birth defects such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, which causes a range of disorders, including abnormal facial features, low IQ, learning and growth issues, and developmental delays. You've done a great job saying no. You're almost there... keep it up! 🍷

Lisa Dana, M.D., is a pediatrician at Golden Gate Pediatrics in San Francisco and a clinical faculty member at University of California, San Francisco.

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