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Miconazole/Clotrimazole and Pregnancy

This sheet talks about the risks that exposure to miconazole or clotrimazole can have during pregnancy. With each pregnancy, all women have a 3% to 5% chance of having a baby with a birth defect. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your health care provider.

What is miconazole?

Miconazole is an antifungal medicine used to treat different infections. It is commonly placed in the vagina for the treatment of vaginal yeast infections. Miconazole creams can also be put on the skin for localized fungal infections. Miconazole is most commonly recognized by the brand name Monistat[®] for treatment of vaginal yeast infections. Vaginal creams are applied once per day for 1 day, 3 days, or 7 days. The longer the treatment, the smaller the concentration of medicine that is used. Some experts recommend the longer treatment during pregnancy to lower the risk of infection recurrence.

Is clotrimazole the same as miconazole?

Clotrimazole is another antifungal medicine used to treat different infections. Like miconazole, it is placed in the vagina for the treatment of vaginal yeast infections. Clotrimazole creams can also be put on the skin for localized fungal infections. Clotrimazole is sold under different brand names including Femcare[®], Lotrimin[®], and Mycelex[®].

Is it true that women get more yeast infections while pregnant?

Yes. Pregnant women are more likely to get yeast infections than non-pregnant women. This may be due to higher estrogen and sugar content in vaginal secretions that create a desirable environment for yeast.

I think I have a vaginal yeast infection and I am pregnant. Should I try an over-the-counter antifungal cream?

If you think you have a vaginal yeast infection during pregnancy, you should first ask your health care provider instead of using over-the-counter creams available in stores and pharmacies. Should you have another kind of vaginal infection, it may be important to treat it differently.

Do medications applied to the skin or vagina get to the baby?

When compared to oral (pill) medicines, topical (on the skin) or vaginal medicines enter your body in lower amounts, so less gets to the developing baby as well. Topical preparations of miconazole and clotrimazole are not well absorbed so they are unlikely to be a concern for the pregnancy. Vaginal use of miconazole or clotrimazole likely results in a higher absorption of the medication into your system compared to skin, but absorption is still low.

Will taking miconazole or clotrimazole during early pregnancy increase the risk for miscarriage?

A single study suggested a small increased risk for miscarriage with miconazole and clotrimazole, but there were several limitations with this study. There is no other evidence that miconazole or clotrimazole increases risk for miscarriage.

Can taking miconazole or clotrimazole during the first trimester of pregnancy cause birth defects?

Miconazole and clotrimazole are commonly recommended during pregnancy to treat yeast infections. Most studies have shown no increased risk of major birth defects in the babies of women who used miconazole or clotrimazole topically or intravaginally during pregnancy.

Is it safe for me to use miconazole or clotrimazole while breastfeeding?

There are currently no studies looking at miconazole or clotrimazole use during breastfeeding. However, because only small amounts of miconazole or clortimazole could pass into breastmilk when used topically or intravaginally, breastfeeding is not thought to be a concern. Miconazole and clotrimazole have also been used directly on infants to treat fungal infections.

What if the father of the baby takes miconazole or clotrimazole?

There are no studies looking at possible risks to a pregnancy when the father takes miconazole. In general, exposure of the father is unlikely to increase the risk to a pregnancy because, unlike the mother, the father does not share a blood connection with the developing baby. For more information, please see the OTIS fact sheet [Paternal Exposures and Pregnancy](#).

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*If you have questions about the information on this fact sheet or other exposures during pregnancy, call **OTIS at 1-866-626-6847.***