Miconazole|Clotrimazole

This sheet talks about exposure to miconazole or clotrimazole in a pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare provider.

What is miconazole?
Miconazole is a medication used to treat fungal infections. Miconazole is most often used as a cream on the skin to treat skin infections, or as a vaginal cream that is placed in the vagina to treat vaginal yeast infections. Vaginal creams (such as the brand name Monistat®) are used for 1 day, 3 days, or 7 days. Your healthcare provider can help you decide which length of treatment is right for you.

What is clotrimazole?
Clotrimazole is also a medication used to treat fungal infections. Like miconazole, clotrimazole is available as a topical cream used on the skin or as a vaginal cream used in the vagina. Clotrimazole is sold under brand names including Femcare®, Lotrimin®, and Mycelex®.

What should I do if I think I have a vaginal yeast infection while pregnant?
Women are more likely to get yeast infections during pregnancy than at other times. If you think you have a vaginal yeast infection during pregnancy, it is important to see your healthcare provider to be sure the infection is yeast before trying to treat it on your own. If you have another kind of vaginal infection, you may need different treatment.

Can miconazole or clotrimazole make it harder for me to become pregnant?
Using miconazole or clotrimazole is not expected to make it harder to become pregnant.

Does using miconazole or clotrimazole increase the chance for miscarriage?
Miscarriage can occur in any pregnancy. One study found a small increased chance for miscarriage with miconazole and clotrimazole, but there were several problems with this study that could have affected the results. Other studies have not found that miconazole or clotrimazole increases the chance for miscarriage.

Does using miconazole or clotrimazole increase the chance of birth defects?
In every pregnancy, a woman starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a baby with a birth defect. This is called her background risk.
Topical (used on the skin) or vaginal medications enter the body in lower amounts than oral (pill) medications. This means less medication reaches the developing baby. Since topical and vaginal miconazole and clotrimazole are not well absorbed, they are unlikely to be a concern for the pregnancy. Most studies have shown that miconazole or clotrimazole at low doses (<400 mg/day) does not increase the chance of birth defects.
A few studies suggest a possible increased chance of abnormalities of the hands and bones when miconazole is used together with other medications, particularly the antibiotic metronidazole. There is not enough data from these studies to prove an association.

Could using miconazole or clotrimazole cause other pregnancy complications or long-term problems in the baby?
No other pregnancy complications or long-term problems in the baby have been identified from using miconazole or clotrimazole.
Can I breastfeed while using miconazole or clotrimazole?

There are currently no studies looking at miconazole or clotrimazole use during breastfeeding. However, because only small amounts of the medication could pass into breastmilk when miconazole or clotrimazole is used on the skin or in the vagina, breastfeeding is not expected to be a concern. Miconazole and clotrimazole creams can be used directly on infants under the care of a healthcare provider to treat fungal infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about your breastfeeding questions.

If a man uses miconazole or clotrimazole, could it affect his fertility (ability to get his partner pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects?

There are no studies looking at fertility or possible risks to a pregnancy when the father uses miconazole or clotrimazole. In general, exposures that fathers have are unlikely to increase risks to a pregnancy. For more information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet on Paternal Exposures at https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy/pdf/.

Please click here for references.