

# Promethazine (Phenergan®)

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This sheet is about exposure to promethazine in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information is based on available published literature. It should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare provider.

## ***What is promethazine?***

Promethazine is a medication that has been used to treat nausea and vomiting, motion sickness, and allergies. It has also been used for sedation (to help sleep) and for treating vertigo (a feeling of motion or spinning). Promethazine is sold under brand names such as Phenergan®, Promethegan®, and Phenadoz®.

Sometimes when people find out they are pregnant, they think about changing how they take their medication, or stopping their medication altogether. However, it is important to talk with your healthcare providers before making any changes to how you take your medication. Your healthcare providers can talk with you about the benefits of treating your condition and the risks of untreated illness during pregnancy.

For more information about nausea and vomiting during pregnancy, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet at <https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/nausea-vomiting-pregnancy-nvp/>.

## ***I take promethazine. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?***

Studies have not been done to see if promethazine can make it harder to get pregnant.

## ***Does taking promethazine increase the chance of miscarriage?***

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. One small study did not report an increased chance of miscarriage in people taking promethazine.

## ***Does taking promethazine increase the chance of birth defects?***

Every pregnancy starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a birth defect. This is called the background risk. Use of promethazine during pregnancy is not expected to increase the chance of birth defects above the background risk.

## ***Does taking promethazine in pregnancy increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems?***

It is not known if promethazine can cause other pregnancy-related problems, such as preterm delivery (birth before week 37) or low birth weight (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces [2500 grams] at birth).

Using promethazine late in pregnancy might increase the chance of slowed breathing (respiratory depression) in newborns. It is important that your healthcare providers know you are taking promethazine so that if respiratory depression happens your baby can get the care that is best for them.

## ***Does taking promethazine in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?***

It is not known if promethazine increases the chance for behavior or learning issues.

## ***Breastfeeding while taking promethazine:***

Studies have not been done to see if promethazine can get into breastmilk. Promethazine can cause sleepiness in adults and might have the same effect in a nursing baby. If you suspect the baby has any symptoms (sleepiness or lack of energy), contact the child's healthcare provider. It is possible that promethazine could reduce how much milk a person makes. If you are having trouble producing milk, talk with your healthcare provider or a lactation specialist. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding questions.

## ***If a male takes promethazine, could it affect fertility or increase the chance of birth defects?***

Studies have not been done to see if promethazine could affect male fertility (ability to get partner pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects above the background risk. In general, exposures that fathers or sperm donors have are unlikely to increase risks to a pregnancy. For more information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet Paternal Exposures at <https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy/>.

Please click [here](#) for references.

Questions? Call 866.626.6847 | Text 855.999.3525 | Email or Chat at [MotherToBaby.org](https://www.MotherToBaby.org).

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