

## Avoiding vitamin A in pregnancy

### Avoiding vitamin A

Getting enough Vitamin A is a careful balancing act. It has the benefit of helping your baby's development, but too much can prove toxic and can increase the risk of birth defects.

In small doses it is essential to the development of cells, bones, skin, eyes, teeth and the immune system: too little has been linked with slow growth, premature delivery, eye damage and skin disorders. Larger doses of vitamin A can cause serious developmental problems in unborn babies, which is why multivitamin supplements containing vitamin A should be avoided.

Remember, not all vitamins and minerals are safe for pregnancy so always check with your midwife before you take a supplement.

### Unsafe sources of vitamin A

Foods such as liver, pâté and liver sausage contain very high concentrations of Vitamin A. Consequently, the Department of Health recommends that pregnant women should avoid eating liver and liver products. Supplements containing vitamin A in the form of retinol should also be avoided.

The best way to ensure you're getting a beneficial level of vitamin A is to continue to eat a healthy, varied diet. Aside from pâté and liver, few foods contain enough vitamin A to cause harm. As long as you have a well balanced diet it's unlikely you'll ever have too much broccoli, carrots or vitamin A rich vegetables. Eating plenty of these fresh, nutrient-packed foods will help you get all the benefits of vitamin A without the risks.

### Safe sources of vitamin A

- Dairy and eggs (cook them well)
- Green leafy veg such as spinach, kale
- Cantaloupe melon, mangoes and apricots
- Orange and yellow vegetables (carrots, peppers, butternut squash and pumpkin)

If you have any concerns about your pregnancy diet, why not give our Careline a call on **08457 623 628** between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday, or ask us a question online, instantly, using Live Chat.