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## **MANAGING ALLERGIES DURING PREGNANCY**

Allergy symptoms can be triggered by both indoor and outdoor allergens and can be seasonal or year-round. The Willamette Valley is host to many allergens such as mold, tree and grass pollen; the month of June is the peak season for grass pollen. There are medications that are safe to use during your pregnancy. We recommend the following over-the-counter medications:

- Antihistamines such as Claritin or Benadryl
- Decongestants containing Phenylephrine (Sudafed PE) – avoid using during the first 14 weeks of pregnancy
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) for headache

Avoid using over-the-counter nasal spray decongestants which can cause rebound congestion that can actually worsen the conditions for which they are being used.

Reducing your exposure to allergens can decrease the intensity of your allergy symptoms. We recommend the following avoidance steps:

- Close your windows; use air-conditioning and avoid outdoor activity between 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. when pollen counts are highest
- Use an indoor HEPA air filter to reduce airborne allergens such as pollen and dust
- Shower before going to bed to eliminate any pollen that may be on your skin or hair
- If you have dust mite allergies, seal pillows, mattresses and box springs in dust mite-proof casings
- Wash your bedding weekly in 130° F water; keep home humidity under 50% to control dust mite and mold growth
- Avoid cigarette smoke and other irritants that may worsen your symptoms

If you are under the care of your primary care physician or allergist to treat your symptoms, please inform us so we can coordinate managing your care.