

# Prenatal Toxin Avoidance Quick-Reference Card

The exposures that matter most during pregnancy — and what to do about them

## Highest Priority: Avoid Completely

- Alcohol — No safe amount during pregnancy. Crosses placenta directly.
- Tobacco / nicotine products — Including vaping. Restricts blood flow to placenta.
- Cannabis / THC — Associated with low birth weight and developmental effects.
- Lead exposure — Old paint, some imported ceramics, certain spices. Test your water.
- Mercury (high-mercury fish) — Avoid: shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, bigeye tuna.
- Cat litter (toxoplasmosis) — Have someone else change it, or wear gloves + wash hands.
- Raw/undercooked meat — Listeria and toxoplasmosis risk.

## High Priority: Minimize Exposure

CATEGORY	COMMON SOURCES	SIMPLE SWAPS
Pesticides	Conventional produce, lawn treatments	Buy organic Dirty Dozen; no lawn chemicals
BPA/Phthalates	Plastic containers, receipts, canned food	Glass storage; decline receipts; fresh or frozen food
PFAS	Non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics	Cast iron or stainless steel; untreated fabrics
Formaldehyde	New furniture, pressed wood, some nail products	Ventilate new items; skip gel manicures
Air pollution	Traffic exhaust, indoor combustion	HEPA filter for bedroom; avoid high-traffic areas
Mold	Damp areas, old buildings	Fix leaks immediately; dehumidifier if >50% humidity
Flame retardants	Furniture foam, electronics	Wash hands before eating; vacuum with HEPA

## Food Safety Quick Rules

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- 1 Eat 2–3 servings of low-mercury fish per week (salmon, sardines, anchovies, herring)
- 2 Wash all produce thoroughly — even organic
- 3 Avoid deli meats and soft cheeses unless heated to steaming
- 4 Use glass or stainless steel for food storage and reheating
- 5 Filter your drinking water (activated carbon minimum; reverse osmosis ideal)
- 6 Buy organic for the Dirty Dozen produce items
- 7 Avoid artificial sweeteners (especially during pregnancy)

## Safe Fish Choices

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### Best Choices (2–3x/week)

- ✓ Salmon (wild)
- ✓ Sardines
- ✓ Anchovies
- ✓ Herring
- ✓ Trout
- ✓ Atlantic mackerel

### Avoid Entirely

- ✗ Shark
- ✗ Swordfish
- ✗ King mackerel
- ✗ Tilefish
- ✗ Bigeye tuna
- ✗ Orange roughy

Don't let this list overwhelm you. Focus on the top 3 exposures you can control today. Any reduction helps. Perfect isn't the goal — better is.