



Beauty Treatments That Are Safe During Pregnancy



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BY ANJANA RAJBHANDARY | SEPT. 28, 2022 3:20 PM EDT

Pregnancy can be a wonderful yet stressful time for many because there's a lot of responsibility that comes with creating a new life. Making lifestyle changes for yourself and your baby's health is crucial — this includes the beauty treatments and products you indulge in.

Your body is undergoing many changes, and as the hormones affect your mood, they might also affect your skin. Some might get a pregnancy glow, while others don't. Eileen Feighny, licensed esthetician, certified aromatherapist, and founder of Tribeca-based Tulura, told [Byrdie](#), "Pregnancy can cause a lot of unwanted issues in the skin like melasma and hormonal acne, but the good news is it's temporary!" While you can use pregnancy-safe skincare ingredients to treat such issues, Kerry Benjamin, celebrity esthetician and founder of StackedSkincare, recommends avoiding salicylic acid, retinoids, benzoyl peroxide, hydroquinone, and some prescription acne medications as they could result in congenital disabilities.

Choosing the right sunscreen is critical as pregnant or not; you still need sun protection. Dermatologist Orit Markowitz told [Harper's Bazaar](#), "I would also avoid any chemical sunscreens, as some of their ingredients have not been tested for safety in pregnancy." According to [Healthline](#), chemical sunscreens work by absorbing the sun's rays, and it's unsure how much of the chemicals are absorbed into the bloodstream. Therefore, it's key to make sure you're only using skincare ingredients that are deemed safe to use during pregnancy.

Still, there are many beauty treatments that are perfectly safe to use when it's time to give yourself a little TLC.

Facials

Facials can be relaxing and an excellent form of self-care. Who doesn't enjoy a little extra love on their faces with fancy products and a lovely massage?

Dr. Joel Cohen, an associate clinical professor of dermatology at the University of Colorado, told [Time](#), "As a dermatologist, I see a lot of patients with misperceptions about different creams and procedures and the whole concept of facials." Though it feels wonderful at the moment, it doesn't do more than moisturize the face.

According to Jeannette Graf, a board-certified dermatologist and assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in NYC, "It can be completely safe to get a facial while pregnant" (via [Verywell Family](#)). However, Dr. Graf recommends checking with your physician to ensure which skincare ingredients and types of facials are safe for use.

Dr. Priyanka Dixit-Patel, a family medicine physician at ChristianaCare in Smyrna, Delaware, suggests going for oxygen, deep-cleansing, and hydrating facials and avoiding

chemical peels, microdermabrasion, and laser treatments, per Verywell Family.

Body Scrubs

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Body scrubs provide either physical or chemical exfoliation and can help remove dead skin cells and cleanse the body, leaving it soft and smooth. Like we use exfoliating cleansers and scrubs for the face, you can do the same with scrubs for your entire body.

During pregnancy, it's better to stick to physical exfoliation. "The idea is to use something

mechanical to remove the top layers of dead skin cells," Kavita Mariwalla, M.D., a dermatologist at West Islip, New York's Mariwalla Dermatology, told [Verywell Family](#). Ellen Marmur, a New York-based dermatologist, recommends [avoiding chemical exfoliants like retinoids](#), salicylic acid, and benzoyl peroxide as "some scientists believe they can be absorbed into a person's bloodstream, which can lead to birth defects" (per [Verywell Family](#)).

Body scrubs are a welcoming treat during pregnancy. "When pregnant, keeping a constant flow of steady oxygen and nutrients throughout your body is key to supporting your health, and your baby's," Samika Traboulay, spa director at Waldorf Astoria Spas and Resorts told [The Bump](#). The gentle massage you get during a body scrub helps with circulation and can be beneficial for you and your baby. Plus, it can also stimulate more collagen and elastin production in your skin, which can help diminish stretch marks.

Massages

Massages are loved because they are relaxing and can help with stiffness, headaches, and **pains that can be common during pregnancy**. However, you need to be cautious about the *kind* of massages you get during this time.

Since there are many different kinds of massages, it's best to check with your physician before getting one just to be safe. According to **American Pregnancy Association**, prenatal massages can help address muscle aches and pains and aid labor. Prenatal massages can also help reduce back and joint pain and improve the quality of your sleep.

It's essential to only go to a certified massage therapist and get the massage when you're lying on your side. However, certain places recommend you wait till you're in your second trimester due to the higher possibility of a miscarriage in your first trimester.

A 2010 **study** shows that regular massages can help with stress, depression, and anxiety in this population. If there is ever a time you deserve a treat — it's now.

Hair Coloring

When you're changing your lifestyle and diet, it's natural to wonder if you can continue going to your regular hair appointments. If you're a fan of coloring your hair, you might wonder whether it's [safe to dye your hair while pregnant](#).

While it's always wiser to err on the side of caution, New Jersey-based obstetrician-gynecologist Daniel DiSabatino told [Forbes](#), "Concern around this [potential risk] started back in the day when hairdressers used stronger bleach products." Dr. DiSabatino added that there's no scientific proof that bleach in hair dyes can harm developing fetuses.

"Many doctors recommend holding off on hair color until week 13 of your pregnancy, just to be safe," Ob/Gyn Salena Zanotti told [Cleveland Clinic](#). This is because the baby grows the most in the first trimester when their brain and spinal cord are developing.

When in doubt, check with your doctor and tell your colorist that you are pregnant when you go for a hair appointment. Instead of coloring your hair at the root, you can try highlights or lowlights where the color doesn't come in close contact with the scalp but still looks gorgeous.

Manicures and pedicures

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Many people feel more put together when they get their nails (and toes) done and wish they had the same skills as nail technicians. It's common to experience some swelling on the feet, and with the bump, it can be pretty inconvenient to paint your toes, but is it safe to get a manicure or pedicure during pregnancy?

Karen Boyle, an assistant professor of urology, obstetrics, and gynecology at Johns Hopkins Hospital, told [Parents](#), "Your nails are growing and getting stronger now, so take

advantage." Dr. Boyle added that though nail polish has chemicals, it most likely won't be absorbed by the nails, resulting in congenital disabilities. However, she does recommend going to a well-ventilated salon if you go for one.

If you're worried about toxic formulas it's best to choose "three-free" brands that don't have ingredients like dibutyl phthalate, toluene, and formaldehyde, per [What To Expect](#). Butter London, Olive & June, and Ella + Mila are great brands that don't contain those chemicals, so they should be a great little treat for those fun mani-pedi moments.

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