

The Department of Finance acknowledges that numerous health and safety issues are associated with air travel. Although commercial air travel is considered safe for normal pregnancies, due to the prolonged lack of access to urgent medical assistance, many airlines require medical clearance for those in their third trimester. Physicians and certain airlines may also caution against air travel for those at risk of pre-term labour or those whose pregnancies are considered high risk. If you are pregnant, prior to travelling, it is therefore recommended that you:

- Consult your physician to discuss any potential risk factors of travelling and confirm that you are safe to travel
- Ask your physician if they recommend you travel with a medical kit, i.e. a kit with preparations to help you manage common pregnancy complaints (such as heartburn and constipation), oral rehydration preparations, multivitamins, urine dipsticks etc.
- Check with the airline to confirm that you are able to travel
- Bring along documentation such as a medical certificate stating your estimated delivery date, as well as a copy of your latest ultrasound exam report to the airport

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Your circulation is already under strain whilst pregnant, therefore lower cabin pressure experienced during a flight can theoretically increase the risk of developing blood clots. To decrease your risk of developing a DVT, try implementing the following strategies:

- Consider wearing support stockings for the duration of the flight
- Drink plenty of water - Keeping up your fluid intake will keep you hydrated whilst also reducing the risk of developing a DVT
- If there is no turbulence present, walk up and down the aisles every half hour. If turbulence is present, remain in your seat and flex and extend your ankles and knees frequently to increase blood flow

Further advice on preventing [Deep Vein Thrombosis \(DVD\) and Long Distance Travel](#) is available on the Comcare website.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN FLYING

There are also a few things you can do to make yourself more comfortable when flying.

Consider the following:

- Wear your seatbelt under your bump and across your lap
- Contact the airline and arrange for a bulkhead seat or a seat with extra leg room
- Book an aisle seat and/or a seat near the restrooms to assist with easier toilet access
- Ask the flight attendant to provide breathing oxygen if you are feeling short of breath or light headed
- Pack your own snacks and foods to ensure you have something nutritious on hand at all times
- Wear loose clothing
- Carry a small pillow so that you can make yourself more comfortable
- Do not hesitate to request assistance loading or unloading a bag into the overhead carriers

INCIDENTS

If you feel you have been impacted by issues related to flying, remember to lodge this as an incident to Konekt Response on: 1300 880 777 or response@konekt.com.au.