

Safe Medicine During Pregnancy

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The healthcare industry knows little about the effects of most medications during pregnancy, according to the The Center for Disease Control (CDC). This is because pregnant women are often not included in studies to determine safety of new medications. Less than 10 percent of medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) since 1980 have enough information to determine the risk for birth defects, says the CDC. However, studies reveal that taking certain medications, many of which are already on the market like Thalidomide and Accutane, during pregnancy can cause serious birth defects.

Back pain is one of the most common complaints during pregnancy. The obvious alteration in weight-bearing and biomechanics of the spine are of paramount importance to investigate when prescribing for pain. In consideration of the Hippocratic Oath, first do no harm, a chiropractic examination is the first order of business. The Diplomate in Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics is a board-certified specialty in chiropractics. The International Chiropractic Pediatric Association (icpa4kids.org) is your go-to resource for education and certification. Doctors in this field regularly work integratively with OB/Gyn's, and credentialed midwives.

The obvious solution is not always the easiest one. More often than not, it is easiest to reach for a pill, a common, well known, over-the-counter pain reliever.

Acetaminophen is the most common drug ingredient in the U.S.. There are more than 28 common over-the-counter drugs that contain acetaminophen and at least 22 prescription drugs not including Tylenol brands and store brands. (1) Many of these are taken for simple colds, fever, achiness, or symptoms of morning sickness.

Back in the day, doctors cautioned not to take any drugs during pregnancy. Of late, pregnant women are often advised that it is safe to do so. A recent

study on [acetaminophen use during pregnancy](#) revealed that prenatal exposure to acetaminophen may increase autism spectrum symptoms in male children. The study further found that maternal use of acetaminophen during pregnancy may be harmful to attention function and may be associated with a higher risk of hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms in the offspring.

These findings were published on July 1 in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*. (2) Persistent use of acetaminophen (paracetamol) revealed a substantial 30 percent increase detrimental attention function and an increase of two clinical symptoms of autism spectrum in boys, who appear to be more vulnerable to androgenic endocrine disruption. In the persistently exposed children, when assessed at age 5, they showed poor performance on computerized tests measuring inattention, impulsivity and visual speed processing.

Dr. Jordi Julvez, co-author of the study, postulated that paracetamol could be harmful to neurodevelopment by its interference with the cannabinoid receptors in the brain, which also relieve pain. "Since these receptors normally help determine how neurons mature and connect with one another, paracetamol could alter these important processes. It can also affect the development of the immune system, or be directly toxic to some fetuses that may not have the same capacity as adults to metabolize this drug, or by creating oxidative stress." (3)

The good news is that, in the integrative and holistic world of healthcare, we do have medicines that are safe and effective for the aches and pains of pregnancy. [Safe homeopathic remedies for you and your baby](#) is a downloadable brochure that I co-authored which lists the top seven conditions for which pregnant women will seek over-the-counter drugs for relief. (4)

In a climate where there are a multitude of factors to take into consideration when attempting to create a safe pregnancy for you and your baby, it is a comfort to know that we do have a reliable 200 year

old system of medicine that can address your concerns. Many conditions are amenable to self-care as described in this brochure. Others will rise to a level where you will want to seek consultation with a professional homeopath. The American Institute of Homeopathy is a resource for MD homeopaths. The Council on Homeopathic Certification is a resource for nationally certified professional homeopath.

The caveats I advise for my patients are: First do no harm. Second, listen to your intuition. Third, do your research. Five, consult with your doctor(s). Sixth, do not act out of fear or ignorance. Pregnancy is a transient state with many ups and downs. It does have an end point. Have no fear. Be Happy. Be Safe. Be Wise.

RESOURCES

1. Knowyourdose.org
2. Acetaminophen Use in Pregnancy and neurodevelopment: Attention Function and Autistic Spectrum Symptoms.
International Journal of Epidemiology, 2016 DOI:10.1093/ije/dyv
3. Science Daily. July 1, 2016
4. Have a Healthy Happy Pregnancy. *Dr. Nancy Gahles, DC, CCH, RsHom(NA), M.J. Hanafin, RN, CNM, NP, DHom.*