

S07-04 - SAFETY/RISK OF PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS IN PREGNANCY AND LACTATION. ADRIENNE EINARSON, THE MOTHERISK PROGRAM

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Psychiatric disorders are relatively common among women of childbearing age, who may become pregnant while they are taking psychotropic drugs. There remains a high level of anxiety regarding their safety among women and healthcare providers alike, most likely because of the conflicting studies that have been published in the literature and warnings from government organizations. In addition, most recently in the case of paroxetine, a successful lawsuit against the manufacturer, holding them responsible for a baby born with a heart defect, following use of the drug by the mother in the first trimester of pregnancy. Consequently, treating a psychiatric disorder during pregnancy with pharmacotherapy, is a complex decision making process, which has to be made between the pregnant woman and her health care provider following careful evaluation of the evidence-based information.

The objective of this presentation is two-fold,

- 1) to discuss models used for studying the use of drugs in pregnancy and
- 2) to provide current information on the safety/risk of psychotropic drugs used in pregnancy.

The body of evidence in the literature to date suggests that psychotropic drugs as a group are relatively safe to take during pregnancy and women and their health care providers should not be unduly concerned if a women requires treatment. Optimal control of the psychiatric disorder should be maintained during pregnancy, the post partum period and thereafter. All pregnancies where a mother has a serious psychiatric disorder should be considered high risk and the mother and fetus, carefully monitored.