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P27. DEVELOPMENTAL TOXICITY AND DRUG RISK ASSESSMENT IN PREGNANCY

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Drug use during pregnancy can prove teratogenicity and cause a permanent abnormality of structure or function on fetus. The risks for the fetus are various, with the most serious being congenital defects, growth impairment, fetotoxic effects and fetal death. However, it does not mean that exposure to a drug will always cause harm. Teratogenic effects of drugs depend on dosage, gestational and administration timing.

Teratogens are agents that can induce developmental toxicity or increase the incidence of a congenital malformation. Major congenital defects occur in 1-3% of the general population at birth. Approximately 2-3% of birth defects are associated with drug exposure. The remaining defects are caused by other environmental exposures during pregnancy such as infection, maternal disease states and ionizing radiation. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) pregnancy risk classification is a rating system to categorize the potential fetal risks due to drugs. Although it provides short and practical information, it is inadequate if used as the sole resource. Labeling for pregnancy generally can not address the spesific clinical circumstances for which the drug is being used. Moreover, the use of the wording “high risk” or “contraindication” might result in unnecessary termination of pregnancy.

Patients exposed to drugs and known teratogens during pregnancy should be informed of the potential side effects. A detailed maternal medical history can help to avoid unnecessary diagnostic intervention. It is also important to contact pharmacology consulting services for more information relating to chemical exposure and medication.