

No statistically significant risk of ID in children from mothers using antidepressants

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A study published by *JAMA Psychiatry* reports no evidence of an association between intellectual disability in children and mothers who took antidepressant medication during pregnancy when other mitigating

factors, such as parental age and underlying psychiatric disorder, were considered.

Intellectual disability is defined by an IQ below 70 with deficits that impair everyday functioning.

Sven Sandin, Ph.D., of the Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, and coauthors, including Abraham Reichenberg, Ph.D., also of the Icahn School of Medicine, used Swedish national registers to conduct a population-based study of 179,007 children born from 2006 through 2007 and followed-up from birth until a diagnosis of intellectual disability, death or the end of the follow-up in 2014.

The authors estimated the relative risk, or probability, of intellectual disability in children exposed during pregnancy to antidepressants or not and the analyses were adjusted for other potential mitigating factors.

Of the 179,007 children included in the study, intellectual disability was diagnosed in 37 (0.9 percent) exposed to antidepressants and in 819 children (0.5 percent) who were unexposed to antidepressants, according to the results.

A higher estimate of relative risk that was observed by the researchers before accounting for parental factors was reduced to a statistically insignificant estimated relative risk when those factors were considered, the results show.

The study notes limitations and acknowledges the outcome was rare. The number of [children](#) diagnosed with intellectual disability during the follow-up period of the first 7 to 8 years after birth was 873 (0.5 percent), which is comparable to some other prevalence estimates, according to the article.

"After adjustment for confounding factors, however, the current study did not find evidence of an association between ID [[intellectual disability](#)] and maternal [antidepressant medication](#) use during pregnancy. Instead, the association may be attributable to mechanisms integral to other factors, such as [parental age](#) and underlying psychiatric disorder," the study concludes.

More information: *JAMA Psychiatry* (2017). doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2017.1727

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