

# Epilepsy drugs during pregnancy linked with later childhood behavioral problems

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A new study has uncovered an increased risk of behavioral problems in children of mothers with epilepsy who took common antiepileptic drugs during pregnancy. Credit: Senior Author Roos Rodenburg, Ph.D.

A new study has uncovered an increased risk of behavioral problems in children of mothers with epilepsy who took common antiepileptic drugs during pregnancy.

In the *Epilepsia* study, behavioral questionnaires were completed for 181 [children](#) aged 6 to 7 years, and for most children both parents completed behavioral questionnaires.

Based on parental ratings, valproate- exposed children were most affected, but parents of carbamazepine-, lamotrigine-, and levetiracetam-exposed children also reported [behavioral problems](#).

"It is important to monitor children of mothers with epilepsy and also consider other possible contributing factors, such as family factors. These may provide starting points for interventions to help [parents](#) cope with or even decrease child behavioral problems," said lead author Yfke Huber-Mollema, MsC, of the Stichting Epilepsy Instellingen Nederland (SEIN) and the University of Amsterdam.

**More information:** *Epilepsia* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/epi.15968](https://doi.org/10.1111/epi.15968)

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