

Pharmacology in Pregnancy

Introduction:

The pharmacological management of mental health disorders in perinatal women, that is, during pregnancy and in the first year postpartum while potentially breast/chest feeding, is highly complex and requires specialized knowledge regarding medication efficacy and safety.

We will highlight the high prevalence of the most common mental health disorders during the perinatal period, which are depression, bipolar illness, anxiety disorders, OCD, post-traumatic stress disorder, ADHD, and substance use disorders. We will briefly review the first line non-pharmacological treatments for mild to moderate illness, and then elaborate on the role of psychotropic medicines for moderate to severe mental health conditions during this time period. We will provide guidance regarding medication selection with consideration of side effects for the mother, potential adverse effects on the pregnancy, the fetus, the delivery, and on long-term child development. This will include a discussion on personalized risk-benefit analysis accounting for a broad range of considerations including weighing the risk of untreated illness versus the risk of psychotropic side effects to mother and child. During the workshop, we will provide the participant with foundational knowledge needed to support the patient and family in this complex decision-making process. We will review physiological changes relevant to pregnancy and lactation that impact pharmacokinetics and dosing and consider the role of other medical co-morbidities as well, including cancer. Ultimately, we aim to offer comprehensive, user-friendly, state-of the art information on medication management in perinatal mental health care.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss physiological changes relevant to pregnancy and lactation that impact pharmacokinetics and dosing and consider the role of other medical co-morbidities
- Discuss prevalence of the most common mental health disorders during the perinatal period
- Discuss balancing the risk of untreated illness with risks of psychopharmacotherapy in pregnancy and during lactation
- Review the first line non-pharmacological treatments for mild to moderate illness

- Discuss pharmacotherapy for depression, anxiety, sleep problems, and ADHD
- Discuss pharmacotherapy for bipolar disorder and psychosis
- Discuss pharmacotherapy for substance use disorders
- To understand how to counsel perinatal persons with mental health disorders before, during, and after pregnancy about risks and benefits of pharmacotherapy

Methods:

Interactive talk, case vignettes in slide set; if time allows, case discussions in small group and with all participants

References:

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