

## **Psychopharmacology in Pregnancy**

### **Maria Muzik, MD, MSc**

Professor of Psychiatry and Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Department of Psychiatry  
University of Michigan

### **Sheila Lahijani, MD**

Associate Clinical Professor  
Division of Medical Psychiatry  
Stanford University School of Medicine

### **Michelle Riba, MD, MS**

Professor of Psychiatry  
Department of Psychiatry  
University of Michigan

**Introduction:** The pharmacological management of mental health disorders in perinatal women, that is, during pregnancy and in the first year postpartum while potentially breastfeeding, 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. 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:**

- To explain the general risks of psychopharmacotherapy in pregnancy
- To understand how to counsel women with mental health disorders before, during and after pregnancy
- To describe the current evidence of the reproductive safety of antidepressants, mood stabilizers, and antipsychotics

**Methods:** Interactive talk, presentations by participants, case discussions in small groups and with all participants

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