

[IMAGE]

## Another Strike Against Acetaminophen Use During Pregnancy?

By Editorial Staff

Tylenol is probably the most well-known over-the-counter pain medication that contains acetaminophen, also known as paracetamol. It's also one of the few pain-relieving OTC medications generally considered safe to take during pregnancy, as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) are discouraged, particularly during the third trimester. We say "generally safe," of course, because all medications have some risk of side effects. During pregnancy, those side effects can affect the mother and/or the child, depending on the medication. What's more, increasing research suggests other safety concerns may be worth considering.

So, back to Tylenol / acetaminophen, which a recent study in *Pediatrics* suggests may not be that safe after all, particularly in terms of the impact it may have on the child. According to the study, expectant mothers who took acetaminophen long-term during pregnancy – not that hard to do, if you think about how often a woman may experience body, headache and other pain and turn to daily medication – were significantly more likely to have a child ultimately diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) than mothers who did not take the medication.

adhd - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark While the study doesn't prove acetaminophen use during pregnancy causes childhood ADHD, the association is eerily familiar to other associations between acetaminophen and childhood behavioral issues, delayed language skills and asthma revealed via research in recent years. It's also concerning because nearly two in three pregnant women take acetaminophen, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

It's certainly enough to talk to your pediatrician about whether you should take the medication barring absolute necessity, such as maternal high fever or infection that could harm your unborn child. And for pregnancy-related aches and pains, why not skip the pain medication entirely and give drug-free pain-relief strategies, such as chiropractic care, a try? You'll be happy you did.

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