

[IMAGE]

## Avoid Opioids During Pregnancy

By Editorial Staff

If your medical doctor is still prescribing opioids for pain management, you may want to let them know opioid abuse, misuse and addiction has been identified as an epidemic in the U.S., and that numerous guidelines recommend non-drug care, including chiropractic, as a first-line option for pain. If that doesn't end the opioid conversation, you should at least make sure you don't take opioids when you're pregnant, because it could have troubling consequences for your child.

We're talking about preterm birth, and according to the Mayo Clinic, premature babies are more likely to suffer chronic health issues such as infections, asthma and feeding problems than full-term babies. The risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) also appears to be higher in premature babies. Being born early also has inherent health risks because as you might expect, the baby is not always full developed and prepared to enter the world (depending on how premature the birth is).

So, you certainly don't want to do anything to increase your risk of delivering preterm, but that's exactly what taking opioids may do. Research published in *JAMA Network Open* suggests "opioid use in pregnancy is associated with higher rates of preterm birth and admission to neonatal intensive care after adjustment for confounding factors."

premature baby - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Sometimes, a preterm birth is out of your control; but knowing what can increase the risk (and avoiding it), you can take back some of the power. Avoid opioids – during pregnancy and altogether, if possible. If your medical doctor still chooses to prescribe opioids, ask them why, and tell them you'd prefer non-drug alternatives. Finally, if you're experiencing pain during or outside of pregnancy, consider chiropractic your first option for pain management, and opioids your last option.

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