Chlordiazepoxide (Librium®)

This sheet is about exposure to chlordiazepoxide in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information is based on published research studies. It should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare providers.

What is chlordiazepoxide?

Chlordiazepoxide is a medication that has been used to treat anxiety and symptoms of alcohol withdrawal syndrome (such as anxiety and agitation). MotherToBaby has a fact sheet on anxiety here https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/anxiety-fact/. Chlordiazepoxide is in a class of medications called benzodiazepines. A brand name for chlordiazepoxide is Librium®.

Sometimes when women find out they are pregnant, they think about changing how they take their medication, or stopping their medication altogether. However, it is important to talk with your healthcare providers before making any changes to how you take your medication. Your healthcare providers can talk with you about the benefits of treating your condition and the risks of untreated illness during pregnancy.

I take chlordiazepoxide. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?

It is not known if chlordiazepoxide can make it harder to get pregnant.

Does taking chlordiazepoxide increase the chance of miscarriage?

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. Studies have not been done to see if chlordiazepoxide can increase the chance of miscarriage.

Does taking chlordiazepoxide increase the chance of birth defects?

Birth defects can happen in any pregnancy for different reasons. Out of all babies born each year, about 3 out of 100 (3%) will have a birth defect. We look at research studies to try to understand if an exposure, like chlordiazepoxide, might increase the chance of birth defects in a pregnancy.

Most reports did not find a higher chance for birth defects with first trimester use of chlordiazepoxide. While there have been some reports of birth defects with first trimester use, no clear pattern of birth defects has been associated with this medication.

Does taking chlordiazepoxide in pregnancy increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems?

Chlordiazepoxide has not been well studied for use during pregnancy. One study found a higher chance for low birth weight (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces [2500 grams] at birth) when chlordiazepoxide was taken during pregnancy. It is not known if chlordiazepoxide might increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems, such as preterm delivery (birth before week 37).

I need to take chlordiazepoxide throughout my entire pregnancy. Will it cause withdrawal symptoms in my baby after birth?

The use of chlordiazepoxide during pregnancy can cause temporary symptoms in newborns soon after birth. These symptoms are sometimes referred to as withdrawal. Symptoms might include tremors, irritability, or other issues. Not all babies exposed to chlordiazepoxide will have symptoms. It is important that your healthcare providers know you are taking chlordiazepoxide so that if symptoms occur your baby can get the care that is best for them.

Does taking chlordiazepoxide in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?

Studies have not been done to see if chlordiazepoxide can increase the chance of behavior or learning issues for the child.

Breastfeeding while taking chlordiazepoxide:

Chlordiazepoxide has not been studied for use while breastfeeding. Chlordiazepoxide stays in the body for a long time and might pass into breast milk. If you suspect the baby has any symptoms (poor feeding, poor weight gain, or sleepiness) contact the child's healthcare provider. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding questions.

If a man takes chlordiazepoxide, could it affect fertility or increase the chance of birth defects?

Studies have not been done to see if chlordiazepoxide could affect men's fertility (ability to get a woman pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects. In general, exposures that fathers or sperm donors have are unlikely to increase risks to a pregnancy. For more information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet Paternal Exposures at https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy/.

Please click here for references.

Questions? Call 866.626.6847 | Text 855.999.3525 | Email or Chat at MotherToBaby.org.

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