Ciprofloxacin (Cipro®)

This sheet is about exposure to ciprofloxacin 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 provider.

What is ciprofloxacin?

Ciprofloxacin (Cipro®) is an antibiotic that has been used to treat a variety of bacterial infections. It is part of a group of antibiotics called quinolones or fluoroquinolones.

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 ciprofloxacin. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?

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

Does taking ciprofloxacin increase the chance of miscarriage?

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. Studies looking at over 2,000 pregnancies exposed to ciprofloxacin in the first trimester did not find an increased chance of miscarriage. One of these reports was a prescription record study. Studies based on filled prescriptions/prescription records are limited, because prescription records cannot tell if a person really took the medication. Some information suggests the use of ciprofloxacin in early pregnancy can increase the chance of miscarriage. However, it is hard to know if the medication, the condition being treated, or other factors are the cause of the increased chance.

Does taking ciprofloxacin 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 ciprofloxacin, might increase the chance of birth defects in a pregnancy. Most research has not found an increased chance of birth defects when ciprofloxacin is taken during the first trimester of pregnancy.

Most studies on ciprofloxacin use during pregnancy involve short-term treatment lasting only 5 to 7 days, so there is limited information on the effects of longer use. However, in 7 cases where ciprofloxacin was taken for 3 weeks to 3 months, no increased chance of birth defects was reported.

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

Studies have not been done to see if ciprofloxacin can increase the chance of pregnancy-related problems such as preterm delivery (birth before week 37) or low birth weight (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces [2500 grams] at birth).

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

Ciprofloxacin's possible effects on future learning or behavior for the child have not been well-studied. One study found that taking ciprofloxacin in the third trimester might be linked to a higher chance of hyperactivity and trouble paying attention in exposed children.

Breastfeeding while taking ciprofloxacin:

There are 13 case reports about using ciprofloxacin while breastfeeding. These suggest that the nursing child gets a small amount of the medication through breast milk. This amount is much less than doses given directly to a baby for treatment. If you take ciprofloxacin while breastfeeding, watch your baby for signs like diarrhea or a yeast infection (such as thrush or a diaper rash). If you notice any of these symptoms, contact your baby's healthcare provider.

Ciprofloxacin can also be prescribed as an eye or ear drop. In these cases, the amount of medication that gets to the milk is expected to be less than with oral use. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding

questions.

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

Studies have not been done to see if taking ciprofloxacin could affect male 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 to view references.

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