Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)

This sheet is about exposure to lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) 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 LSD?

Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) is a drug that can change how a person thinks and sees the world around them. It can cause intense thoughts and emotions, seeing things that are not there (hallucinations), and believing in things that are not real (delusions). Physical effects of LSD include increased blood pressure, fast heart rate, and dilated pupils (when the black centers of the eyes are larger than usual). LSD has many common names, including “acid”, “blotter paper”, “Kool-Aid”, “Lucy” “micro dot”, and “pane”.

LSD has also been used in small doses to treat conditions such as depression and anxiety. This sheet will focus on the use of LSD without medical supervision.

I use LSD, and I would like to stop using it before getting pregnant. How long does the drug stay in my body?

The time it takes the body to process (metabolize) medication is not the same for everyone. In healthy adults, it takes up to 2 days, on average, for most of the LSD to be gone from the body.

I use LSD. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?

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

Does using LSD increase the chance of miscarriage?

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. It is not known if LSD can increase the chance of miscarriage. Two studies on LSD use from the early 1970s reported an increase in miscarriage. However, the authors of these studies could not confirm that LSD use caused the miscarriages.

Does using LSD 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 LSD, might increase the chance of birth defects in a pregnancy. It is not known if using LSD can increase the chance of birth defects. Some small studies of LSD use in pregnancy did not find an increased chance of birth defects. There are reports of babies being born with birth defects after exposure to LSD, but there is little evidence that LSD caused those birth defects. No pattern of birth defects has been reported with LSD use during pregnancy.

Does using LSD in pregnancy increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems?

Studies have not been done to see if using LSD 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 using LSD in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?

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

Breastfeeding while using LSD:

LSD has not been studied for use during breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is not recommended while LSD is present in the body. If you have used LSD while breastfeeding and you suspect the baby has any symptoms (such as dilated pupils, fast heartbeat, or unusual eye movements or behaviors) contact the child’s healthcare provider. Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding questions.

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

Studies have not been done to see if using LSD can affect male fertility (ability to make healthy sperm) or increase the chance of birth defects. In general, exposures that men 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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