



MotherToBaby

Medications & More During Pregnancy & Breastfeeding  
Ask The Experts

Fact Sheet

by the **Organization of Teratology Information Specialists (OTIS)**

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## Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)

In every pregnancy, a woman starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a baby with a birth defect. This is called her background risk. This sheet talks about whether exposure to LSD may increase the risk for birth defects over that background risk. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your health care provider.

### ***What is LSD?***

Lysergic acid diethylamide (commonly known as LSD) is a drug that causes an altered state of mind (hallucinations/delusions). Some physical effects of LSD on the body can include increased blood pressure, fast heart rate, and dilated pupils. This drug is usually taken by mouth, but can also be taken by injection (using a needle) or by inhalation (breathing it into lungs). “Acid”, “Kool-Aid”, and “Blotter Paper” are examples of slang or street names for LSD.

### ***I took LSD. How long should I wait to become pregnant?***

LSD breaks down differently in each person. How LSD breaks down and leaves the body is complicated and probably depends on the dose taken along with health and other characteristics of the person using the drug. On average, it is thought that most of the LSD is gone from the blood stream in one or two days.

### ***Can use of LSD during pregnancy cause miscarriage?***

The chance of having a miscarriage from using LSD is not yet known. There are some data that suggest the use of LSD may increase the chance to have a miscarriage, but more studies are needed to confirm this risk.

### ***Can use of LSD during pregnancy cause birth defects?***

Many of the studies on LSD are very old, and they found different results. There are reports of babies being born with birth defects, and reports of babies born without birth defects following LSD use during pregnancy. Additionally, a study of pregnant women given LSD for medical reasons did not show a link with causing birth defects. There is no pattern of birth defects seen with LSD use during pregnancy. More pregnancy studies are needed to confirm if LSD causes birth defects.

### ***Can use of LSD during pregnancy cause learning or behavioral problems for the child?***

Long term studies have not been done to follow pregnancies with exposure to LSD to see if using LSD during pregnancy causes learning or behavioral problems for the child.

### ***Can I breastfeed while taking LSD?***

There is little information on the safety of using LSD while breastfeeding. Based on the molecular size of this drug, it is likely that it enters breast milk. LSD should be avoided while breastfeeding for a number of reasons, including the concern that women caring for young children should not be on mind-altering drugs. Be sure to talk with your health care provider about all of your breastfeeding questions.

### ***What if the father of the baby takes LSD?***

There are no confirmed reports that prior use of LSD by anyone would increase the chance of having a baby with a birth defect. In general, exposures that fathers have are unlikely to increase the risks for babies to have a birth defect or to cause other negative pregnancy outcomes. For more information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet on Paternal Exposures and Pregnancy at: <https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy/pdf/>.

## **Selected References:**

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