MDMA (Molly, Ecstasy)

This sheet is about exposure to MDMA in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare provider.

What is MDMA?

3,4 methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) is a drug that can cause an altered state of mind (hallucinations / delusions). Other names for MDMA include Molly, ecstasy, E, X, XTC, and Mandy. MDMA can be taken by mouth as a pill or capsule or snorted / inhaled as a powder.

If you have been using MDMA, please seek help right away. Treatment is available to help you stop using MDMA. Talk with your healthcare providers; they are there to help you.

I am taking MDMA, but I would like to stop taking it before getting pregnant. How long does the drug stay in my body?

People eliminate drugs at different rates. In healthy adults, it takes up to 4 days, on average, for most of the MDMA to be gone from the body.

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

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

Does taking MDMA increase the chance for miscarriage?

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

Does taking MDMA increase the chance of birth defects?

Every pregnancy starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a birth defect. This is called the background risk. Based on the studies reviewed, it is not known if MDMA increases the chance for birth defects above the background risk. One small study reported an increase in heart defects and / or club foot (foot points downward and inward). However, it is not known if the MDMA or other factors caused the increase in birth defects.

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

Based on the studies reviewed, it is not known if MDMA can cause other 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 MDMA in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?

Based on the studies reviewed, it is not known if MDMA increases the chance for behavior or learning issues. A study of twenty-eight pregnancies exposed to MDMA reported infants showed a delay in development at four months old. Another study followed a small group of children exposed 1 month before pregnancy and in the first and second trimesters. The study suggested that babies exposed to MDMA might be delayed in their motor development up to 2 years of age. However, the women who were pregnant also reported exposure to alcohol and other drugs. This makes it hard to know if the MDMA, other exposures, or other factors caused these delays.

Breastfeeding while taking MDMA:

Breastfeeding while using MDMA is not recommended. MDMA passes into breast milk. Amphetamine drugs (like MDMA) are found at higher levels in breastmilk than in the blood stream. If MDMA has already been taken, it has been recommended to express and discard breast milk for 48 hours. If you suspect the baby has any symptoms (fever, seizures, rapid heartbeat, eyes rolling, looking upwards for a period of time), contact the child's healthcare provider. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all of your breastfeeding questions.

If a man takes MDMA, could it affect fertility (ability to get a woman pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects?

Studies have not been done to see if MDMA could affect a man's fertility or increase the chance of birth defects above the background risk. In general, exposures that men have are unlikely to increase the 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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