Meclizine

This sheet is about exposure to meclizine in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information is based on available published literature. It should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare provider.

What is meclizine?

Meclizine is a medication that has been used to treat nausea and vomiting, motion sickness, and vertigo (a feeling of whirling and loss of balance). It belongs to a class of medications called antihistamines. Meclizine is available over-the-counter and by prescription. Some brand names that can include meclizine are Antivert[O], Bonine[O], Meclicot[O], and Dramamine[O].

Sometimes when people 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. MotherToBaby has a fact sheet on nausea and vomiting in pregnancy here https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/nausea-vomiting-pregnancy-nvp/.

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

Studies have not been done to see if taking meclizine can make it harder to get pregnant.

Does taking meclizine increase the chance of miscarriage?

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. When used as directed, meclizine is not expected to increase the chance of miscarriage.

Does taking meclizine 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. Most studies do not suggest an increase in birth defects with use of meclizine during the first trimester.

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

It is not known if meclizine can increase the chance of other pregnancy 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 meclizine in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?

It is not known if meclizine increases the chance for behavior or learning issues.

Breastfeeding while taking meclizine:

There is no information on meclizine use while breastfeeding. If you suspect that the baby has symptoms (such as drowsiness or dry mouth), contact the child's healthcare provider.

It is possible, but not proven, that antihistamines may lower the amount of breastmilk a person makes. This might be more likely to happen if antihistamines are used together with an oral decongestant like pseudoephedrine (Sudafed[å]), or if used before breastfeeding is fully established (when a baby is first born). Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding questions.

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

Studies have not been done to see if meclizine could affect male fertility (ability to get a partner pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects above the background risk. 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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