Ziprasidone (Geodon®)

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

What is ziprasidone?

Ziprasidone is a medication that has been used to treat bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and schizoaffective disorder. Ziprasidone belongs to a group of medications called atypical antipsychotics or second-generation antipsychotics. A brand name is Geodon®.

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

A reported side effect of ziprasidone is sexual dysfunction (problems with sexual desire, sexual arousal, orgasms, or sexual pain disorders). If a person has sexual dysfunction, it might make it harder for to get pregnant.

I just found out that I am pregnant. Should I stop taking ziprasidone?

Talk with your healthcare providers before making any changes to how you take this medication. For some people, the benefits of staying on an antipsychotic medication during pregnancy can outweigh any potential concerns.

Does taking ziprasidone increase the chance for miscarriage?

Miscarriage can occur in any pregnancy. It is not known if taking ziprasidone would increase this chance for miscarriage. There are no well controlled studies on ziprasidone use during pregnancy in humans. One prescription-based study saw a slightly higher chance of a miscarriage among people who were pregnant and filled a prescription for ziprasidone in pregnancy. This type of study cannot tell us if the person actually used the medication. In addition, since untreated or uncontrolled mood disorders can increase the chance of miscarriage, it might have been the pregnant person’s condition that led to the miscarriage.

Does taking ziprasidone increase the chance of birth defects?

Every pregnancy starts with a 3-5% chance of having birth defect. This is called the background risk. It is not known if taking ziprasidone would increase the chance for birth defects. There are no well controlled studies on ziprasidone use during pregnancy in humans. Animal studies have raised some concern about a higher chance for birth defects. However, animal studies cannot always predict how a medication would affect a human pregnancy. There are case reports of healthy outcomes in children born to people who were pregnant who used ziprasidone in pregnancy.

Can taking ziprasidone cause other pregnancy complications?

It is not known. There are no controlled studies on ziprasidone use during pregnancy in humans.

I need to take ziprasidone throughout my entire pregnancy. Will it cause withdrawal symptoms in my baby after birth?

It is unknown if taking ziprasidone could increase the chance of withdrawal symptoms in a newborn, also called neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). However, other similar medications have been associated with a chance for NAS. Babies who were exposed to ziprasidone near near delivery can be monitored for symptoms such as stiff or floppy muscle tone, drowsiness, agitation, tremors, difficulty breathing, and problems with feeding. If a baby develops symptoms, in most cases they are expected to go away in a few days without long term health effects.

Does taking ziprasidone in pregnancy affect long-term problems in behavior or learning for the baby?

There are no studies on behavior or development of infants exposed to ziprasidone during pregnancy. However, there are a few case reports of healthy children with normal development among people who used ziprasidone during pregnancy.

Can I breastfeed while taking ziprasidone?

Ziprasidone has not been well studied for use while breastfeeding. There is one case report on a person who took
Ziprasidone 40 mg and citalopram 60 mg throughout the pregnancy and while breastfeeding. The nursing baby was reported to healthy and well developing at age 6 months old. Talk to your healthcare providers about all of your breastfeeding questions.

I take ziprasidone. Can it make it harder for me to get my partner pregnant or increase the chance of birth defects?

There are no well-controlled studies in men exposed to ziprasidone. 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/pdf/.

National Pregnancy Registry for Psychiatric Medications: There is a pregnancy registry for women who take psychiatric medications, such as ziprasidone. For more information you can look at their website: https://womensmentalhealth.org/research/pregnancyregistry/.

Please click here for references.