From Climate Change's Effects in Pregnancy to Gestational Marijuana Use, Top Scientists Present Latest Research

MotherToBaby, Teratology Society, DNTS Come Together June 22 – 25 in San Diego and Host Facebook Live Event for the Public

SAN DIEGO, CA – "It's an incomparable gathering of experts," said Christina Chambers, PhD, MPH, MotherToBaby President, Teratology Society Past President and Professor of Pediatrics at UC San Diego in reference to the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Organization of Teratology Information Specialists (OTIS), the non-profit behind the no-cost MotherToBaby service. MotherToBaby provides evidence-based information about exposures during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The OTIS Annual Meeting will take place at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina June 22 – 25 and be held jointly with other leading organizations in the field of birth defects research.

Dr. Chambers, who recently made headlines with her groundbreaking study showing that certain marijuana compounds linger much longer in breast milk than previously thought, described the Annual Meeting as "critical to future generations." "New information will be shared at this meeting on hot topics, such as cigarette smoking and marijuana in pregnancy, as well as advancements in understanding birth defects, like congenital heart defects," she said. "It's this kind of information that can lead to better treatment for expectant and nursing moms."

The OTIS Annual Meeting will be held simultaneously and on-location with the Teratology Society (TS) and the Developmental Neurotoxicology Society (DNTS), whose meetings extend until June 26. Other hot topics to be discussed at the various meetings include:

- Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO): A National Research Program (joint with OTIS-TS-DNTS)
- Congenital Heart Defects Research: Finding the Hidden Crossroads between Genetics and Environment (joint with OTIS-TS)
- A Smoking Gun that Faced Opposition: The Causal Agent of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (joint with OTIS-TS)
- Cigarette Smoking and Development (OTIS)
- The Scientific Evidence for Short and Long-term Risks of Gestational Marijuana Use and Marijuana Use during Breastfeeding (OTIS)
- Ocean-Borne Risks to Pregnant Women and Their Babies (joint with TS-DNTS)
- Maternal Morbidity and Mortality: Causes, Disparities and Solutions (TS)
- What Do We Need to Know about Climate Change and Effects on Maternal-Fetal Health? (TS)

Scientists and healthcare providers in Southern California are encouraged to attend as day passes are still available for all meetings. To register, visit OTIS' and the Teratology Society's registration pages.

In addition, a Facebook Live event will be held Saturday, June 22 at 5p during which MotherToBaby's Facebook followers can ask questions about "what's ok" during pregnancy and breastfeeding. The event is aimed at the pregnant or breastfeeding mother as well as healthcare providers. To be alerted of the event, follow @MotherToBaby on Facebook. "Our Facebook followers will be able to get the latest research-based answers directly from world-renowned experts attending the Annual Meeting about everything from marijuana to medications and their known effects on a pregnancy or while breastfeeding," described Chris Stallman, a certified genetic counselor and host of the Facebook Live event. Stallman is also host of The MotherToBaby Podcast, available on iTunes, Google Play, Spotify, Stitcher and podcatcher services everywhere. "No topic will be off-limits and we hope the public will take advantage of this rare opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at the scientists providing the MotherToBaby service."

More about OTIS and MotherToBaby

The Organization of Teratology Information Specialists (OTIS) is a professional scientific society made up of individuals engaged in assessing and evaluating risks to pregnancy and breastfeeding from environmental exposures. Members include, but are not limited to, specialists in the fields of: obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, genetics, dysmorphology, perinatal epidemiology, teratology, behavioral teratology, pharmacy, genetic counseling, nursing, midwifery, maternal and child health, public health, and includes experts that provide MotherToBaby services and researchers that conduct MotherToBaby Pregnancy Studies. MotherToBaby is a suggested resource by many federal agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). To be connected with a MotherToBaby expert, please call (866) 626-6847, text questions to (855) 999-3525 (standard messaging rates might apply, check with your carrier) or visit www.MotherToBaby.org.

About the Teratology Society

The Teratology Society is an international and multidisciplinary group of scientists including researchers, clinicians, epidemiologists, and public health professionals from academia, government and industry who study birth defects, reproduction, and disorders of developmental origin. The Teratology Society is made up of nearly 700 members worldwide specializing in a variety of disciplines, including developmental biology and toxicology, reproduction and endocrinology, epidemiology, cell and molecular biology, nutritional biochemistry, and genetics as well as the clinical disciplines of prenatal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, neonatology, medical genetics, and teratogen risk counseling. Scientists interested in membership in the Teratology Society are encouraged to visit www.teratology.org. The society's official journal, ***Birth Defects Research,*** is published by John Wiley & Sons in partnership with the Teratology Society.

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