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Opioid and other substance use disorders during pregnancy

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AHEC Grand Rounds



Disclosure



I have no disclosures.





Scope of the problem



- Rates of perinatal opioid use disorder (OUD) have quadrupled in recent years
- Opioid-related mortality in pregnancy has doubled
- Stimulants (methamphetamine and cocaine) remain some of the most common substances used in pregnancy and major drivers into treatment





Pathways to Substance Use



- Chronic pain conditions are more common for women
- Health care providers are more likely to prescribe opioids for female chronic pain patients with depression/anxiety
- Women are more likely to be victims of physical and sexual violence in childhood and as adults
- Introduction to substance use by an intimate partner



SUD and female bodies

- Sex differences in metabolism due to physiologic differences related to sex hormones and percent body fat
- Increased experiences of craving
- Telescoping





Screening for SUD in pregnancy



- ACOG recommends that all pregnant people be screened at least once during pregnancy
- Screening by self report can be highly sensitive with a low false-positive rate
- Urine drug testing should be reserved for specific situations and confirmatory testing





Screening - 5Ps

1. Parents - Do either of your parents have a problem with alcohol or other drugs?
2. Peers - Do any of your friends have a problem with alcohol or other drugs?
3. Partner - Does your partner have a problem with alcohol or other drug use?
4. Past - In the past, have you had difficulties with alcohol or other drug use, including prescription medications?
5. Present - In the past month, have you drunk any alcohol or used other drugs?





Responding to positive screens

PARENTS, PEERS, AND PARTNER

- Counsel regarding risk for alcohol or substance use in pregnancy
- Consider offering referral for social work services





Responding to positive screens

PAST, PRESENT

- Review current substance use
- State medical concerns related to substance use in pregnancy
- Consider referring for further assessment and intervention





Urine drug testing

- Although formal consent is not required, offering UDS in discussion with the patient is best practice
- When used as a stand-alone screening, can produce false positive results and patient distress





Indications for UDS

- Known SUD in the past three years
- Fewer than four antenatal visits or first visit in the third trimester
- Placental abruption
- New diagnosis of hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV, or syphilis
- Maternal prescription of opioids, benzodiazepines, or stimulants
- Maternal symptoms of active substance use





Infant testing

URINE

- Buprenorphine may not be routinely included
- May be less sensitive

MECONIUM

- Confirmation may take 3-5 days.
- Must be collected before contaminated by transitional human milk or formula
- May be more sensitive





Evidence-based treatment

- Individual or group behavioral health counseling (outpatient or residential)
- Medications for SUD with excellent data in pregnancy
 - Buprenorphine (Subutex, Suboxone)
 - Methadone
- Medications for SUD currently under investigation
 - Naltrexone
 - Medications for stimulant use disorders





Medications for opioid use disorder

BUPRENORPHINE

- Partial mu agonist
- SL film, tablet, and IM formulations
- Requires DEA X-waiver to prescribe
- Both buprenorphine (Subutex) and buprenorphine-naloxone (Suboxone) are safe in pregnancy





Medications for opioid use disorder

METHADONE

- Full mu agonist
- PO tablet and liquid formulations
- Administered at outpatient treatment programs only





Clinical pearls for MOUD

- Collaborative and integrated models of prenatal care can both work well
- Try to mitigate stigma associated with OUD by training office and hospital staff about MOUD
- Continue postpartum MOUD at the same pregnancy dose





Special considerations for women with SUD

- Rates of prior physical and sexual abuse in this group are extremely high
- Pregnant women who use substances experience incarceration disproportionately
- Links between the medical system, the criminal legal system, and child welfare are complicated





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Questions?



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