

MEETING ABSTRACTS

ANTIDEPRESSANTS IN TREATMENT OF MATERNAL DEPRESSION: RISKS AND BENEFITS

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Depressive disorder is a serious mental illness whose incidence is constantly increasing in developed countries. About 20% of pregnant women suffer from maternal depression. Both untreated and treated maternal depression represents risk factor for development of fetus and newborn. The maternal hormones, such glucocorticoids, have been reported to be altered in response to a maternal challenging environment. These molecules cross the placenta and reach the fetus, altering the neurodevelopmental pathways in the fetus that may affect the proper brain functioning, leading to an increased risk for neurodevelopmental disorders. Antidepressants used to treat maternal depression represent also a risk factor for fetal and neonatal development. The results of our experimental studies have been shown beneficial effects of selected antidepressants on neurogenesis, synaptic plasticity and behavioral variables on rat offspring. However, there are many controversy on effects of maternal depression and antidepressants on fetal and early postnatal development. Therefore, it is highly topical to investigate their potential unfavorable as well as beneficiary effects on healthy development of the offspring.

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