Guideline Update: Management Issues for Women with Epilepsy Protocol

Clinical Questions for Patients

Clinical questions

The systematic review for this practice guideline addresses the following questions:

1. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, which antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) are more likely than others to cause major birth defects?

2. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, which AEDs are more likely than others to cause later problems in thinking in their child?

3. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, which AEDs are more likely to cause major birth defects if the dose is higher rather than lower?

4. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, which AEDs are more likely to cause later problems in thinking in their child if the dose is higher rather than lower?

5. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, what are the risks of major birth defects from taking more than one AEDs versus taking just one AEDs?

6. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, what is the later risk of thinking problems in their child from taking more than one AEDs versus just taking one?

7. For women with epilepsy who are pregnant, does having seizures during pregnancy increase the chance for problems in your baby’s development, such as problems with your child’s thinking, the baby being of smaller size than what is normal for newborns of the same stage in development, and birth that is too early?

8. For women with epilepsy who are taking AEDs:
   A. Does pregnancy change the amount of drug in your blood?
B. Are lower levels of the amount of drug in your blood related to how often you have seizures?

C. Does changing the dose of AEDs cause unwanted effects of the medicine, such as dizziness, clumsiness, and double vision, in pregnant women?

9. For pregnant women with epilepsy taking folic acid:
   A. Are there differences in the outcome of their pregnancy versus pregnant women with epilepsy who do not take folic acid?
   B. At what dose of folic acid are these differences noticeable?

10. For women with epilepsy, does being pregnant change how often you have seizures?

**Key for Clinical Questions**

- Antiepileptic drugs (AEDs)—medicines used to lessen how often seizures happen.
  - Examples of these medicines are carbamazepine, lamotrigine, oxcarbazepine, phenytoin, topiramate, and valproic acid.