

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 15th August 2016 - Embargoed until 11:00 ET / 16:00 GMT

PAGB response to Paracetamol and Pregnancy Study

Research, published online in JAMA Paediatrics, has suggested that use of paracetamol (acetaminophen) during pregnancy may be associated with increased risk of multiple behavioural problems in children. The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children, carried out by the University of Bristol between 1991 and 1992, assessed questionnaires for 7,796 mothers at 18 and 32 weeks, along with partners and children aged 5 and 7 years old.

The authors of the study recognise that their findings are from an observational, rather than a randomised controlled study, with the results based on answers to questionnaires completed at various intervals over a long period of time. The limitations of this type of study are well known and the authors also acknowledge that their work does not account for the amount of paracetamol taken and the duration of use, therefore, it is impossible to understand whether the paracetamol was taken within guideline levels.

Donna Castle, PAGB Director of Communications, comments: “The NHS advice on paracetamol is that it can be used through all stages of pregnancy to reduce a high temperature (fever) and relieve pain. This is supported by a large body of evidence from over 50 years of paracetamol use.

“The results of this study should not alarm expectant parents as more research is needed in this area. The authors have also highlighted the potential risk of not treating fever or pain during pregnancy, over any potential harm that prenatal paracetamol use may cause to their offspring.

“We would recommend pregnant women and those with young infants should always speak to their pharmacist, midwife or GP before taking any medicine,

including paracetamol. It's also important that pregnant women use paracetamol at the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible time.”

- ENDS -

Notes to editors:

PAGB (Proprietary Association of Great Britain) is the UK trade association representing manufacturers of branded over-the-counter medicines, self care medical devices and food supplements.

For further information, please contact Pegasus: Lauren Jones or Amy Simmons
01273 712000 / PAGB@thisispegasus.co.uk