

MEDIA RELEASE

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PAGB response to paracetamol in pregnancy and risk of ADHD and autism

John Smith, PAGB Chief Executive, comments: “We welcome any new research* on over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, however these findings should not concern or worry pregnant women. It is important to note that the studies reviewed were observational studies and the authors themselves acknowledge that the findings should be interpreted with caution, as the available evidence could be susceptible to several potential sources of bias.

“The official 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 in humans.

“In line with current guidelines, we advise that pregnant women use paracetamol at the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible time and the researchers stress that this advice remains unchanged. They also note that leaving pain and fever untreated could have a detrimental effect on the unborn child.

“We would recommend that pregnant women should always speak to their GP, midwife or pharmacist before taking any medicine, including paracetamol. It’s also important to read the product information carefully and only use in accordance with the instructions.”

**A study carried out by The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, has reported that using paracetamol during pregnancy may increase the child’s risk of developing attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism.*

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.

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