

## Chiropractic Prevents ADHD? Research Shows...

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

Now that I have your attention, let me tell you what the latest study actually states. As you may have noticed, research over the past few years has begun to reveal that acetaminophen (the primary ingredient in Tylenol) is not as safe as once thought. [A new study](#) (published in the *Journal of the AMA - Pediatrics*)<sup>1</sup> has shown an association between the use of acetaminophen during pregnancy and the "risk for developing attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)-like behavioral problems or hyperkinetic disorders (HKDs) in children."

Researchers found that "children whose mothers used acetaminophen during pregnancy were at higher risk for receiving a hospital diagnosis of HKD, use of ADHD medications, or having ADHD-like behaviors at age 7 years. Stronger associations were observed with use in more than 1 trimester during pregnancy." They ultimately conclude: "Maternal acetaminophen use during pregnancy is associated with a higher risk for HKDs and ADHD-like behaviors in children."

What makes this study so profound is that acetaminophen is probably one of the most commonly used / prescribed drugs for pain and fever during pregnancy. According to [the FDA](#), "in 2005, consumers purchased more than 28 billion doses of products containing acetaminophen." A "hydrocodone-acetaminophen combination product has been the most frequently prescribed drug since 1997."<sup>2</sup>

It is no secret that I am very much against the use of any drug except when absolutely necessary. All drugs have side effects. In this case, acetaminophen (also known as paracetamol) has been heavily marketed to the American public since the early 1950s. Children's Tylenol was first marketed in 1955, the year I was born. Now, more than 60 years later, we are still learning about new adverse reactions, ones that our children's children will be stricken with for decades.

There is no other health care provider with the conviction to communicate the message regarding the dangers of drugs. Unlike a decade ago, there is currently a continuous stream of studies that demonstrate the association between the use of various drugs and numerous harmful adverse reactions. Television ads by law firms confirm the frequency of these findings.

Most of the consumer public will not understand or respect a message that is absolutely anti-drugs. The pharmaceutical industry's \$600 billion annual marketing budget, along with the medical profession's decades-long cultural authority, have had a significant impact on what the average American believes about "health care."

But we can be proactive in keeping our patients informed of the latest findings regarding the drugs they use. At the rate the research is currently being released, it will only take a few studies for them to get the picture.

The frightening reality is it will not be long before one of your patients reports that they know the mother of an ADHD child who took Tylenol while pregnant or heard of a woman who overdosed on prescribed pain drugs. As you make your patients aware of the studies reporting the association of common drugs with serious adverse events, encourage them to discuss these issues with the

people they know.

Sadly, serious drug-related adversity is already happening in your community. You have an opportunity to be identified with a healthier, drugless way of life. That opportunity will ultimately increase the public's awareness, respect and trust of you and the chiropractic profession overall.

I'm not a doctor of chiropractic. I've never been to chiropractic college. I barely earned passing grades in my science classes. But the knowledge I've gained just by taking some time to read the available research online has made me a source of health information for the people I know. You have a lot more to work with as far as your experience and knowledge.

If you want an easy place to get information on recent studies, take a look at [my blog](#). I post a short summary of a new study every Tuesday and Thursday. You can also "friend" me on Facebook, where these studies are reposted.

The information you share can actually increase health, reduce illness and in some cases, save lives. Chiropractic instead of drugs can prevent a lot of bad outcomes. Be *that* kind of doctor.

### *References*

1. Liew Z, Ritz B, Rebordosa C, Lee PC, Olsen J. Acetaminophen use during pregnancy, behavioral problems, and hyperkinetic disorders. *JAMA Pediatr*, published online February 24, 2014.
2. Acetaminophen Overdose and Liver Injury - Background and Options for Reducing Injury. U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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APRIL 2014