

MEDIA RELEASE

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PAGB response to Pregnancy and Paracetamol Study

New published research, carried out by the University of Edinburgh's Medical Research Council and The Wellcome Trust, has reported that using painkillers during pregnancy may reduce the fertility of any female offspring. The study¹ was carried out on rats not humans, using a small number of animals.

John Smith, PAGB Chief Executive comments: "We welcome any new research on over-the-counter medicines. However, the study findings resulted from tests on a small number of rats and much more research would be needed to establish if the same effect applied to humans.

"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. Current guidelines advise that pregnant women use paracetamol at the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible time. This is supported by a large body of evidence from over 50 years of paracetamol use in humans."

"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 use according to the instructions."

- 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
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¹ Dean, A. et al. Analgesic exposure in pregnant rats affects fetal germ cell development with inter-generational reproductive consequences. Sci. Rep. 6, 19789; doi: 10.1038/srep19789 (2016): <http://www.nature.com/articles/srep19789>