

Dear Healthcare Professional Communication

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Topamax® (Topiramate): Increased risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in infants whose mothers used topiramate during pregnancy

Dear Healthcare Professional,

Johnson & Johnson Middle East Branch, in agreement with Saudi Drug and Food Authority (SFDA), would like to inform About risk of neurodevelopmental disabilities in children whose mothers took Topiramate during pregnancy.

Summary

- A large observational study that found a link between prenatal exposure to Topiramate and an increased risk of autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disability, and neurodevelopmental disorders.
- Pregnancy testing should be done prior to starting Topiramate in a woman of childbearing potential, and the patient should be fully informed of the hazards of using the Topiramate during Pregnancy.

Background on the safety concern:

Topiramate is used:

- Prevent migraine headaches in adults after consideration of possible alternative treatment options
- Alone to treat seizures in adults and children aged older than 6 years
- With other medicines to treat seizures in adults and children aged 2 years and older.

The Nordic register-based study of antiepileptic drugs in pregnancy (SCAN-AED) is a population-based cohort including 4.5 million mother child pairs, the most important findings were robust and dose dependent associations between prenatal topiramate exposure and neurodevelopmental disorders. These associations persisted after accounting for potential confounding factors.

The results further demonstrated that prenatal exposure to several common antiseizure medication (ASM) dual therapies was associated with an increased risk

of neurodevelopmental disorders within the same range as prenatal topiramate exposure, even without these ASMs being one of the drugs used. The population-based cohort found a clear risk of adverse neurodevelopment in children exposed to topiramate, particularly at doses of 100 mg or more per day. Prenatal topiramate exposure is associated with an increased risk of being born small for gestational age, and with an increased risk of congenital malformations. High risks for congenital malformations have been associated with daily doses more than 100 mg. Few studies have assessed cognitive and behavioural child outcomes after prenatal topiramate exposure.

When appropriate, counsel pregnant women and women of childbearing potential about alternative therapeutic options is advisable. Women of childbearing potential who are not planning a pregnancy to use effective contraception while using topiramate, keeping in mind that there is a potential for decreased contraceptive efficacy when using estrogen-containing birth control with topiramate.

References:

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3. *Epileptic Disord.* 2019;21(6):497-517. doi:10.1684/epd.2019.1105
4. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2015;53:45-50. doi:10.1016/j.reprotox.2015.03.003
5. *Epilepsia.* 2014; 55(11):1714-1721. doi:10.1111/epi.12758
6. *Neurology.* 2016; 87(18):1943-1953. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000003157
7. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2012;34(3): 308-311. doi:10.1016/j.reprotox.2012.05.038
8. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry.* 2018;89(12):1324-1331. doi:10.1136/jnnp-2018-318386
9. <https://www.janssenlabels.com/package-insert/product-monograph/prescribing-information/TOPAMAX-pi.pdf>
10. <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/prac-starts-review-topiramate-use-pregnancy-women-childbearing-potential>

Please refer to Topamax® Patient information leaflet for complete prescribing information,

The information in this letter has been approved by the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA).

Call for Reporting

Healthcare professional should report suspected adverse reactions associated with this product in accordance with the national spontaneous reporting system:

SFDA (National Pharmacovigilance Center):

Email : npc.drug@sfda.gov.sa

Telephone : 19999

Online: <http://ade.sfda.gov.sa>

Company Contact Points:

If you have further question or require additional information, please contact our local safety department at:

Email: GCC-PV2@its.jnj.com

Tel: +966 11 4339133

Yours sincerely,

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