Routine Ultrasound Testing
Not Proven Safe for Pregnant Women

It is common for a pregnant woman to undergo several routine ultrasounds during her 40-week pregnancy. What many don’t know, and despite what popular medical and government websites state, ultrasound scans have never been proven safe for pregnant women or babies and aren’t recommended for routine use and non-high risk pregnancies.

An ultrasound is a diagnostic scan that emits ultra-high-frequency sound waves at tissues or bones. As the echo waves return to the machine, a picture is created. In the 1970s it was thought that ultrasounds were safe for pregnant women because of the very low scanning intensities; however, since 1993 the FDA has allowed high-output machines to scan babies at eight times the tolerable level without conducting any epidemiological studies. In addition, each scan heats surrounding tissues and bones up to six degrees higher than the maximum determined level of safety and can cause cavitation, where gas pockets in tissues and body fluid collapse. This can lead to a disruption in cell function and permeability, bleeding, and can have adverse effects on early fetal development.

Ultrasound studies done on animals have shown cell abnormalities to several generations, brain hemorrhages, lung damage, slow locomotor and learning abilities that worsened with longer exposure, and neuronal migration abnormalities consistent with autism and dyslexia in humans. Mice exposed to 600 minutes of ultrasound survived no longer than ten days.

Despite convincing evidence in animals that ultrasounds are dangerous, few studies have been conducted on humans, most of which are from other countries who limit ultrasound use. These studies have shown the following adverse effects including preterm labor, miscarriage, low birth weight, poorer birth condition, perinatal death, dyslexia, inner ear damage, and delayed speech development. An Australian randomized Doppler study involving high-risk mothers found more fetal distress in labor and lower APGAR scores at birth. Another Australian study showed that babies given five or more ultrasounds during pregnancy were 30 percent more likely to develop intrauterine growth retardation consistent with the findings in animal studies.

The American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine advises patients to make an informed decision concerning possible adverse risks. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecology recommends scans only for specific reasons, and along with the FDA, discourages the use of ultrasounds for non-medical purposes. A review in the U.S Journal of Epidemiology suggests that continued research is needed to evaluate the potential adverse effects of ultrasound exposure in pregnancy. Unfortunately, women are led to believe that ultrasounds are harmless and properly studied. This is clearly not the case.
Sources:


http://www.isrrt.org

http://www.fda.gov

About the author:

Megan Heimer is an attorney, traditional naturopathic doctor, registered yoga teacher, and has a bachelors degree in political science. She has extensive knowledge in holistic nutrition, natural health, and alternative medicine. Megan is currently conducting research on various natural health topics, writing a book, and counsels clients in natural healing all over the world.

http://www.naturalnews.com/038833_ultrasound_pregnant_women_testing.html