

Essay summary of early pregnancy

[Health & Medicine](#), [Pregnancy](#)



Early pregnancy is the most common problem in our society. We should have a knowledge about what giving birth is. Dr. Rakic's research team, cited earlier in this article for its recent study on mouse brains and ultrasound, pointed out that " the probe was held stationary for up to 35 minutes, meaning that essentially the entire fetal mouse brain would have been continually exposed to the ultrasound for 35 minutes...in sharp contrast to the duration and volume of the human fetal brain exposed by ultrasound which will typically not linger on a given tissue volume for greater than one minute."

This is an excellent point, which is worth pursuing. One of the most popular non-medical uses of ultrasound, which can extend a medically indicated session, is to determine the sex of the baby. Could this have a connection to the increase in birth defects involving the genitals and urinary tract? The March of Dimes says that these types of birth defects affect " as many as 1 in 10 babies," adding that " specific causes of most of these conditions is unknown. "

Following this line of thought, consider what other parts of the body are scrutinized by ultrasound technicians, such as the heart, where serious defects have soared nearly 250 percent between 1989 and 1996. The list of unexplained birth defects is not a short one, and in light of what is emerging about prenatal ultrasound, scientists should take another look at all recent trends, as well as the baffling 30% increase in premature births since 1981, now affecting one in every eight children, with many showing subsequent neurological damage.

Although many claim that ultrasound benefits outweigh the risks, that statement has no basis and much evidence is to the contrary. A large randomized trial of 15, 151 pregnant women, conducted by the RADIUS Study Group, found that in low-risk cases, high-risk subgroups and even in cases of multiple gestations or major anomalies, the use of ultrasound did not result in improved outcome in the pregnancies.

The argument that ultrasound is either reassuring to the parents or provides an early opportunity for bonding pales in the face of the possible risks that are emerging as new data become available. Parents and health practitioners may not be able to easily turn away from this window on the womb and resume more traditional practices in obstetrics and midwifery. However, with the disturbing trend in autism and other equally troubling, unexplained birth-related trends, it does not make sense to blindly employ a technology that is not reliably safe for unborn babies.