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### **Autism and ultrasound: Is there a connection?**

This question needs to be answered—and soon—because prenatal ultrasound exposure is increasing dramatically.

In July 2011, researchers published results that should finally make the medical community look at what many have said is an obvious suspect as a cause of autism – prenatal ultrasound. The study of twins<sup>i</sup> indicates that something environmental during gestation or shortly after is the main cause of autism. Research has shown ultrasound to be capable of cell and tissue damage.

If one of 100 babies who have 3 ultrasounds each develops autism, theoretically only one in 300 ultrasounds causes damage. While we wait for large studies to find this needle in a haystack, the public deserves to be warned.

There are two main theories about ultrasound: 1) there is a very specific time in fetal brain development when the ultrasound can do harm and 2) the damage is caused by overexposure - either a defective device or operator error. The enclosed summary of the evidence and the website [www.ultrasound-autism.org](http://www.ultrasound-autism.org) provide access to more than 30 research papers and articles pertinent to these theories.

The FDA safety guidelines<sup>ii</sup> for prenatal ultrasound exposure specify a basic instruction of as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA) in terms of time and intensity. Yet some expectant mothers have an ultrasound examination every month, and some ultrasound exposures last more than an hour. The FDA has issued alerts but without the forthright terms that will command public and professional attention: autism and brain damage.

The first U.S. study focused on the topic<sup>iii</sup> reports a connection between multiple second-trimester ultrasounds of girls and autism. Because the ultrasounds were done in Kaiser Permanente clinics and hospitals, the chance of overexposure is probably lower than in the broader community, particularly those non-medical ultrasounds performed in shopping mall boutiques. Further analysis of this data is underway, but it is limited in scope.

The continuing increase in autism requires a true investigation into the possible adverse effects of ultrasound on the developing fetal brain. Existing databases for ASD studies hold valuable data regarding ultrasound exposure that the researchers did not analyze or do not plan to analyze because the scope of that study is genetics, chemicals or some other narrow area. These databases must be mined for potential evidence that could lead to prevention of autism.

Above all, the media needs to alert the public. Once you have read the attached, we feel certain you will be convinced that prospective parents deserve to be advised of the potential danger.

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### **RESOURCES:**

Hirasaki and Evans are two concerned individuals without any personal connection to autism who independently concluded from the scientific evidence that prenatal ultrasound is a major contributor to the dramatic rise in autism. Hirasaki, an engineer, is profiled on [www.ultrasound-autism.org](http://www.ultrasound-autism.org). For additional information about Evans, a science writer, read this interview on [The Huffington Post](#).

“[The Elephant in the Room](#),” a PowerPoint presentation from the minutes of the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IAAC) of U.S Department of Health & Human Services, is an excellent overview of the growth of autism and possible environmental causes.

Please call for referral to technical and medical professionals.

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<sup>i</sup> [Genetic Heritability and Shared Environmental Factors Among Twin Pairs With Autism](#)

<sup>ii</sup> [Medical Ultrasound Safety, Second Edition. ISBN 1-932962-13-1](#)

<sup>iii</sup> [Antenatal Ultrasound and Risk of Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)