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Women's Health News  
Published: Tuesday, 15-May-2007

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Every year, we "invent" more than 2,000 new substances, most of them contaminants, which are emitted into the environment and which are consequently present in food, air, soil and water. Nonetheless, human beings are also victims of these emissions, and involuntarily (what is known in this scientific field as "inadvertent exposure"), every day humans ingest many of these substances which cannot be assimilated by our body, and are accumulated in the fatty parts of our tissues.

This is especially worrying for pregnant women. During the gestation period, all the contaminants accumulated in the organism have direct access to the microenvironment where the embryo/foetus develops. The doctoral thesis "Maternal-child exposure via the placenta to environmental chemical substances with hormonal activity", written by Maria Jose Lopez Espinosa, from the Department of Radiology and Physical Medicine of the [University of Granada](#), analyzes the presence of organochlorine pesticides -normally used as pesticides- in the organisms of pregnant women. The analysis was developed at San Cecilio University Hospital, in Granada, with 308 women who had given birth to healthy children between 2000 and 2002. The results are alarming: 100% of these pregnant women had at least one pesticide in their placenta, but the average rate amounts to eight different kinds of chemical substances.

In her study, through the analysis of the placentas, L? studied the presence of 17 endocrine disruptive organochlorine pesticides (i.e., pesticides which interfere with the proper performance of the hormonal system). The results showed that the most frequent pesticides present in the placenta tissue are DDE (92.7%), lindane (74.8%), endosulfan diol (62.1%) y endosulfan-I (54.2%). Among these, the most prevalent was endosulfan-dioli, with an average concentration of 4.15 nanograms per gram of placenta (156.73 ng/g lipid). Surprisingly, the UGR researcher discovered that some patients' placentas contained 15 of the 17 pesticides analyzed.

A total of 668 samples from pregnant women were used in this study, which was approved by the Ethical Commission of San Cecilio University Hospital. Mothers were informed of the study's goals before giving their express consent.

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