

Life events in the first trimester of pregnancy are related to a poor pregnancy outcome in mothers of ADHD children.

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Objective:

To determine whether life events during pregnancy are associated with a poor outcome of pregnancy in a clinically treated sample of children with attention deficit hiperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Methods:

All outpatients (and their biological mothers) who had been confirmed with an ADHD diagnosis by a structured MINI-KID interview¹ and who were currently being treated by our service were asked to participate.

The inclusion criteria for children consisted of age between seven and eighteen years, availability of direct maternal information and informed consent. Patients with Intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders or neurological damage were excluded. The final sample consisted of 116 subjects.

Maternal life events were evaluated by the Social Readjustment Rating scale². In an interview, mothers were asked about life events during the first, second, and third trimesters of pregnancy.

Obstetric complications were evaluated by gestational age and the total score of the McNeil-Sjostrom scale³

Pearson correlations (r) between life event scores (in every period) and gestational age were calculated.

Results:

A significant correlation between life events during only the first trimester of pregnancy and gestational age ($r = - 0.200$, $p= 0.044$) was found.

Life event scores during the first trimester of pregnancy and total obstetric complications showed the same correlation ($r = 0.208$, $p=0.043$).

Conclusions:

First trimester life events can be relevant to pregnancy outcome, even when life events that are not catastrophic are included. This may be an important area for developing prevention strategies for neurodevelopmental disorders such as ADHD.
