

Teratogenesis, teratogens

Teratogenesis

Teratogenesis is a specific term for **abnormal** process (processes) during the prenatal development that leads to developmental errors (in general called **birth defects** or congenital malformations - see question 100: Inborn errors of development in human, examples, classification).

Teratogenesis is quite complex process which involves different factors - called teratogens - that affect the normal process of prenatal development. Not each of the teratogen exposures actually leads to formation of some defect, there are many other factors that will influence the final result of the exposure:

- Type of teratogenic factor (its "potency").
- Genotype of the mother and embryo/fetus.
- Species of the particular organism.
- Time factor - length and timing of teratogen exposure (mind so called "preteratogenic period").
- Dose/intensity of teratogenic factor.
- Other/random factors.

Teratogens

Described in detail in Question 99 (Environmental mutagens and teratogens).