

References

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MISCELLANY

TERATOGENIC PROPERTY OF LSD

The finding of chromosomal abnormalities in cultured cells grown in the presence of LSD was followed by several new scientific communications on the teratogenic (foetal malformation) properties of this substance. Recently it was proved by G. F. Alexander and his co-workers that in rats a single injection of LSD on the fourth day of pregnancy at a dose of 5 mg/body weight — corresponding to the human hallucinogenic dose (1.7 to 6.7 mg/kg) — may cause abortions, malformation and significantly retarded development of the off-spring. (Mental Health Digest, U.S. Depart-

ment of Health, Education and Welfare, Dec. 1967, p. 15.)

Zellweger and co-workers from the University Department of Pediatrics, Iowa City, United States, are continuing their studies on the effects of lysergide on the chromosomes. They write that while the significance and effects of chromosome breaks are unknown, their works suggests presumptive evidence that LSD, if taken by a woman during the organogenetic period of her pregnancy, may have a teratogenic effect on the foetus. (*Lancet*, 1967, II: 7529, p. 1306.)

CANNABIS IN EARLY PREGNANCY

Referring to the report by Zellweger *et al* of the first case of human teratogenicity with possible causal relationship to LSD (*Lancet*, Nov. 18, p. 1066), Persaud and Ellington from the Department of Anatomy, University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica, write that the resin of cannabis, like LSD, produces abnormal mental phenomena in both the cognitive and perceptual spheres. They tested the effects of the resin on the mouse embryo, in their programme of screening drugs of

West Indian origin for embryopathic activity. The foetuses of pregnant mice treated on day 6 of gestation with a single intraperitoneal dose (16 mg per kg) of the resin showed a high incidence of over-all stunting. No apparent malformations were observed. The size of the litter was not significantly reduced. There were complete foetal resorptions in animals given 16 mg per kg of the resin intraperitoneally daily for days 1 to 6 of gestation. (*Lancet*, 1967, II: 7529, p. 1306.)