



Re: Autism Spectrum Disorders are not Linked to β_2 Adrenergic Receptor Agonists Treatment for Preterm Labour/Asthma - Still should be Administered <72 h

Reichmann JP*

1322 Garrick Way, Marietta, 30068 Ga, USA

Corresponding author: James P Reichmann, 1322 Garrick Way, Marietta, 30068 Ga, USA, Tel: 404 780 5555; E-mail: reichmannjim@gmail.com

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Letter to Editor

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest the commentary authored by Dr. Morrison and Dr. Elliott entitled, "Autism Spectrum Disorders are not linked to β_2 Adrenergic Receptor Agonists Treatment for Preterm Labour/Asthma [1]. The same authors have written narrative opinion pieces regarding the association between terbutaline and autism spectrum disorders [2-4]. Letters to the editor have refuted the strength of their assertion [5,6]. Interestingly this argument is largely academic because the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has already determined that long term exposure (>72 h) is unsafe for the mother and as a result terbutaline has received a "black box warning" stating it is unsafe to administer to pregnant women as a maintenance therapy for preterm labour [7]. In that same correspondence to this author the FDA stated, "it is not possible to draw conclusions regarding an association between terbutaline exposure in utero and autism" given the limitations of the evidence. The evidence neither proves nor disproves a relationship. A review article on the topic presented a case for biological plausibility of an association between terbutaline exposure

in utero and autism spectrum disorders and a recommendation that treatment duration should be as short as clinically feasible; that seems reasonable [8].

References

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