

## 4. A Prospective Study of Malformation at Birth Associated with Taking Herbal Medicines During Pregnancy

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**Introduction:** A variety of drugs taken during pregnancy can be associated with potential malformations at birth. These can be serious, even fatal.

**Aim of the study:** The study of malformation cases at birth related to taking herbal medicines.

**Methods:** To assess the relationship between exposure to drugs and malformation, a one year prospective study (2006) including all cases of birth malformation associated with taking health products (medicine, herbal medicines and so on) is being conducted at the Souissi maternity unit at Ibn Sina CHU in Rabat. We will present only the results concerning cases related to malformation associated with herbal medicines.

**Results:** Since the beginning of the study, five cases of malformation associated with taking medicinal plants were recorded. They all represent cases of *Trigonella foenum graecum* L. (Fenugreek) malformation. Malformations at birth are hydrocephaly, anencephaly and spina bifida type. The plant was taken mainly in the first three months of pregnancy. The mothers concerned are aged between 25 and 40.

**Discussion:** All the cases, which have in common only the use of fenugreek, are under investigation. To date, the centre has been unable to explain any relationship between the ingestion of the plant seeds and the malformations recorded. The study will continue until 31 December 2006.