

Inflammation during embryonic development - Studying the consequences of chorioamnionitis Disease

Inflammation during embryonic development from highly virulent organisms constitutes a serious complication of pregnancy with a high rate of fetal morbidity and mortality. This condition is due mostly from microorganisms such as, E. coli, group B streptococci and anaerobic bacteria that are normally present in the vagina. These pathogenic microorganisms ascend into the uterine cavity affecting at first the membranes that surround the fetus (chorion and amnion), a condition called acute chorioamnionitis. Clinically, the chorioamnionitis is characterized by maternal fever, leukocytosis, tachycardia, uterine tenderness and finally causing an inflammatory cascade that leads to preterm rupture of membranes / preterm birth.

Evidence from humans and experimental models has been shown that chorioamnionitis is associated with a fetal inflammatory response which is characterized by increased release of systemic inflammatory cytokine and toxic molecules. It seems that these substances induce secondary growth disorders on fetal development which have been associated with the occurrence of serious complications and congenital malformations in various organs of the fetus. Disturbances that have been recorded in the development of the brain, sensory organs of sight and hearing, in the respiratory, gastrointestinal and urinary tract, and finally disorders of embryonic hematopoiesis in the liver, spleen and thymus gland.

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