

Chapter 9



COMMON PULMONARY DISEASES DURING PREGNANCY

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Dyspnea in Pregnancy

Shortness of breath is reported in up to 70% of healthy pregnant women. The physiological changes such as the increased abdominal birth and progesterone-induced stimulation of the respiratory center in the brain, can explain the increased hyperventilation and per-minute ventilation. In the third trimester, most pregnant women complain of exercise intolerance, which is difficult to differentiate from the underlying disease. Clinicians should consider pulmonary embolism, pneumonia, asthma, anemia, pre-eclampsia, and cardiac causes in the differential diagnosis.

Asthma

Bronchial asthma is the most common respiratory disease during pregnancy, as it is often seen in young women. The incidence of asthma in pregnancy is 3-8% and this ratio seems to be increasing.⁽¹⁾ The Global Initiative for Asthma(GINA) guideline recommends the same medical treatment for pregnant women as same as for non-pregnant patients. However, while the asthma patients are checked once every three months, the pregnant asthma patients should be assessed once a month.⁽²⁾

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