



Silent Dangers: Inappropriate Prescription of Teratogenic Medications in Reproductive-Aged Women



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GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

- In the United States, 11.7 million women of reproductive age are prescribed teratogenic medications annually.¹
- A teratogenic drug is one that can have ruinous effects on the development of the fetus throughout the pregnancy.²
- Potential teratogens are prescribed for different medical conditions such as seizures, cardiovascular diseases, and weight loss.^{3,4}
- A study conducted in two primary care clinics found that 25% of reproductive aged female patients were prescribed a teratogenic medication, and more than 50% did not have a contraceptive in their care plan.⁵

Purpose

To quantify the number of reproductive-aged female patients at the Piedmont Athens Regional (PAR) Clay Community Care Clinic (CCCC) who are prescribed potentially teratogenic medications without adequate family planning discussions and an appropriate reproductive history.

Methodology

- Retrospective study performed with data from 07/01/22 through 12/31/22
- Female PAR CCCC patients aged 18-49 included
- Data from the electronic medical records extracted using Slicer Dicer and individual chart reviews by authors
- Outcome variables:
 1. Current use of a teratogenic medication
 2. An appropriate reproductive history determined by:
 - last menstrual period
 - current contraceptive use
- Data analyzed in Excel with descriptive statistics reported

Results

Table 1: Information of Overall Patient Population (158)					
Race		Medical History		Insurance Status	
White	92 (58.2%)	Hypertension	70 (44.3%)	Insured	122 (77.2%)
Black	62 (39.2%)	Diabetes	131 (82.9%)	Uninsured	36 (22.8%)
Asian	1 (0.63%)	Heart Failure	6 (3.8%)		
Other	3 (1.9%)				

Percentage of Women Taking Teratogenic Medications

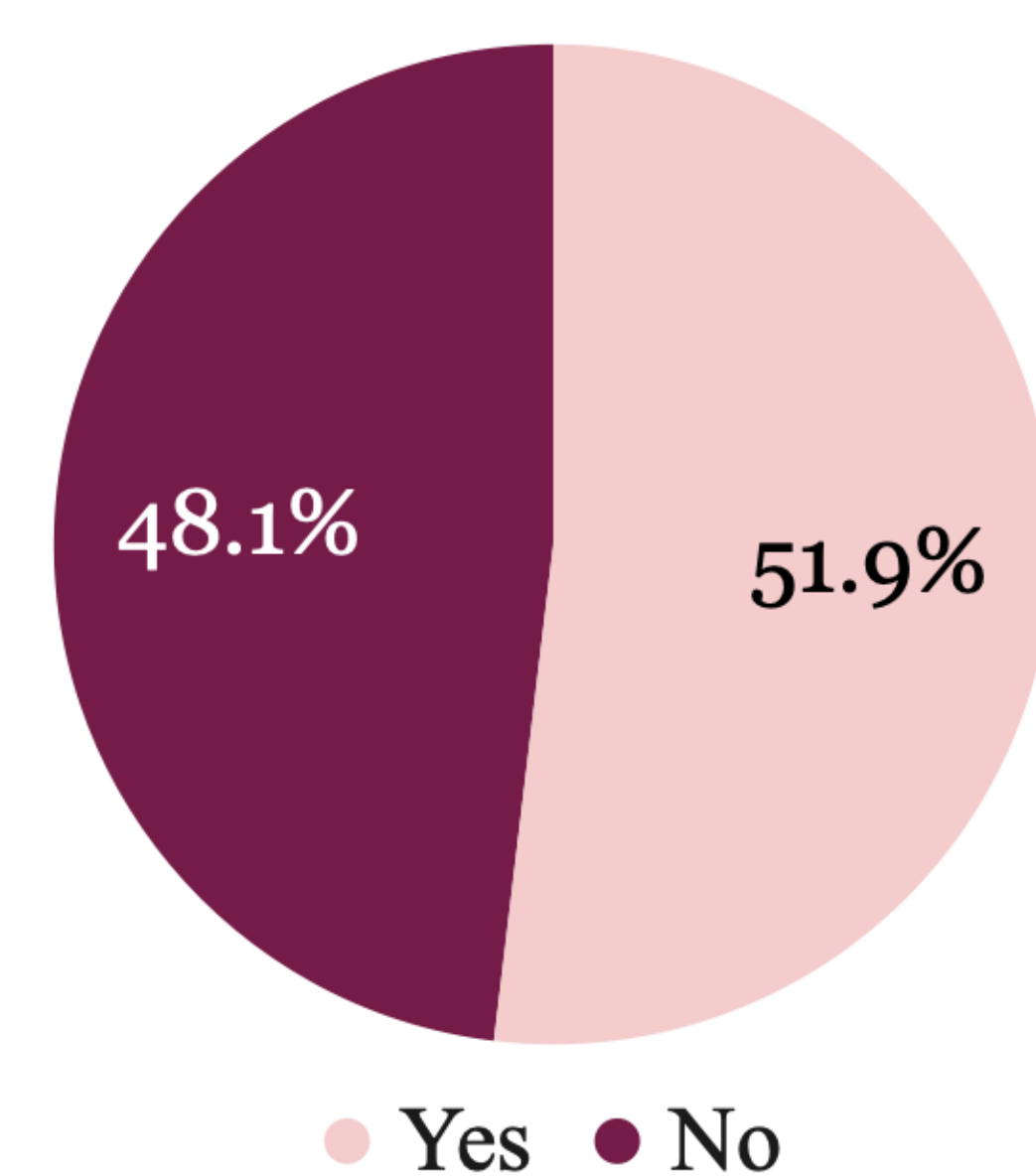


Figure 1. The percentage of women prescribed a teratogenic medication out of the original patient population of 158 women.

Women Prescribed Teratogenic Medications by Age

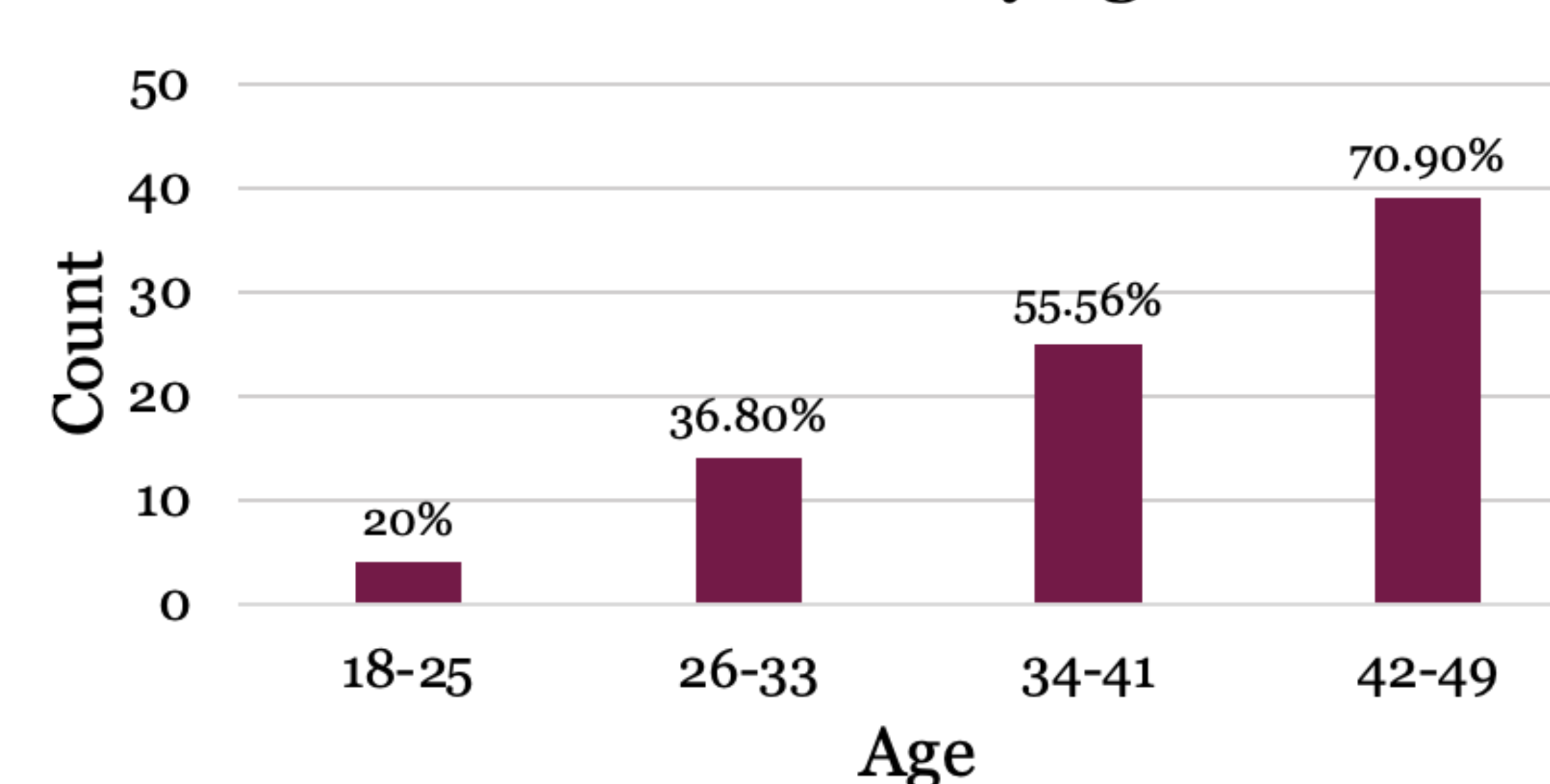


Figure 2. The number of women prescribed teratogenic medications by age group. Percentages of women prescribed a teratogen per age range are displayed.

Documentation of Contraceptive Use

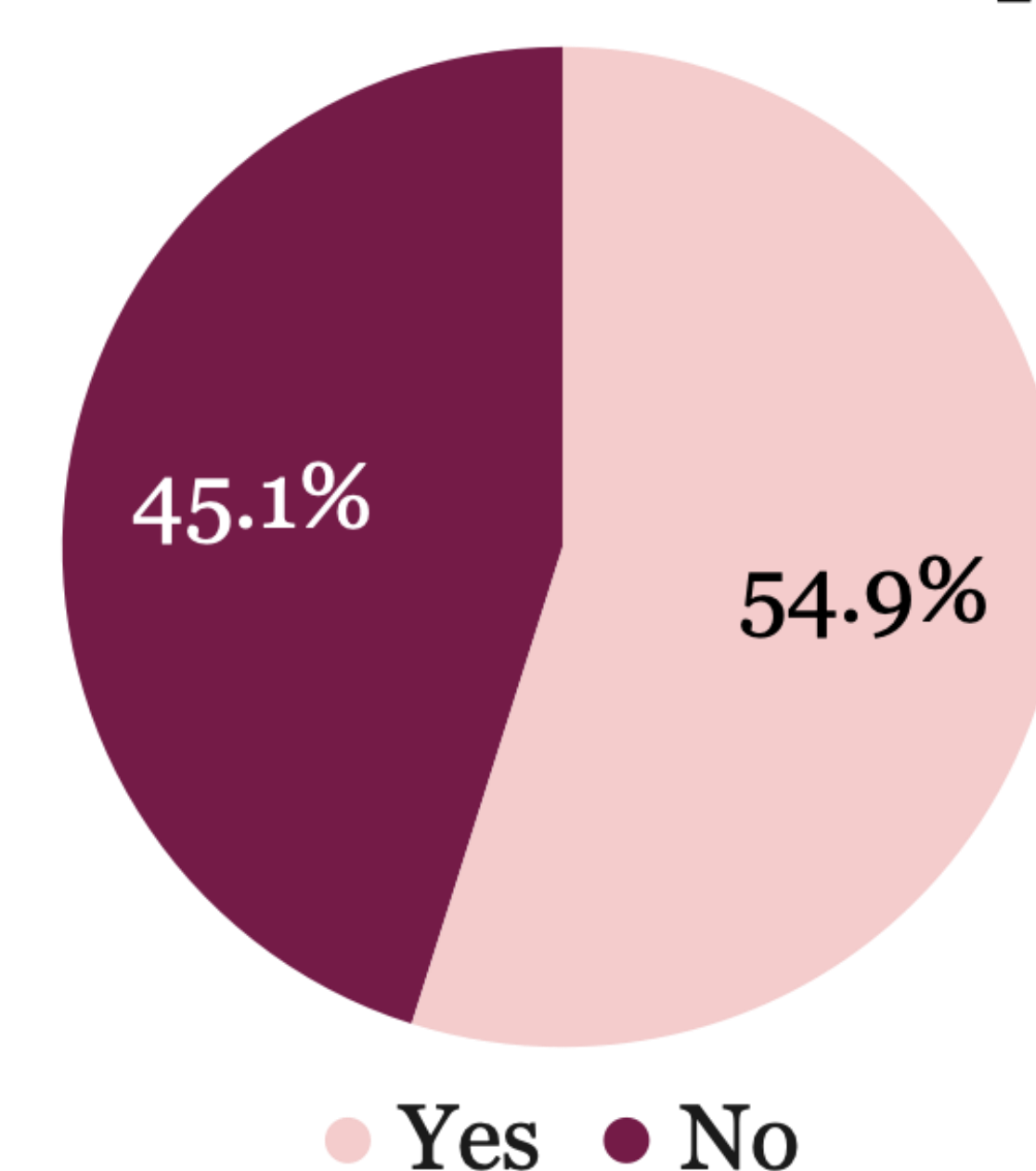


Figure 3. The percentage of women with adequate documentation of contraceptive use out of the women who are prescribed teratogenic medication.

Documentation of Last Menstrual Period

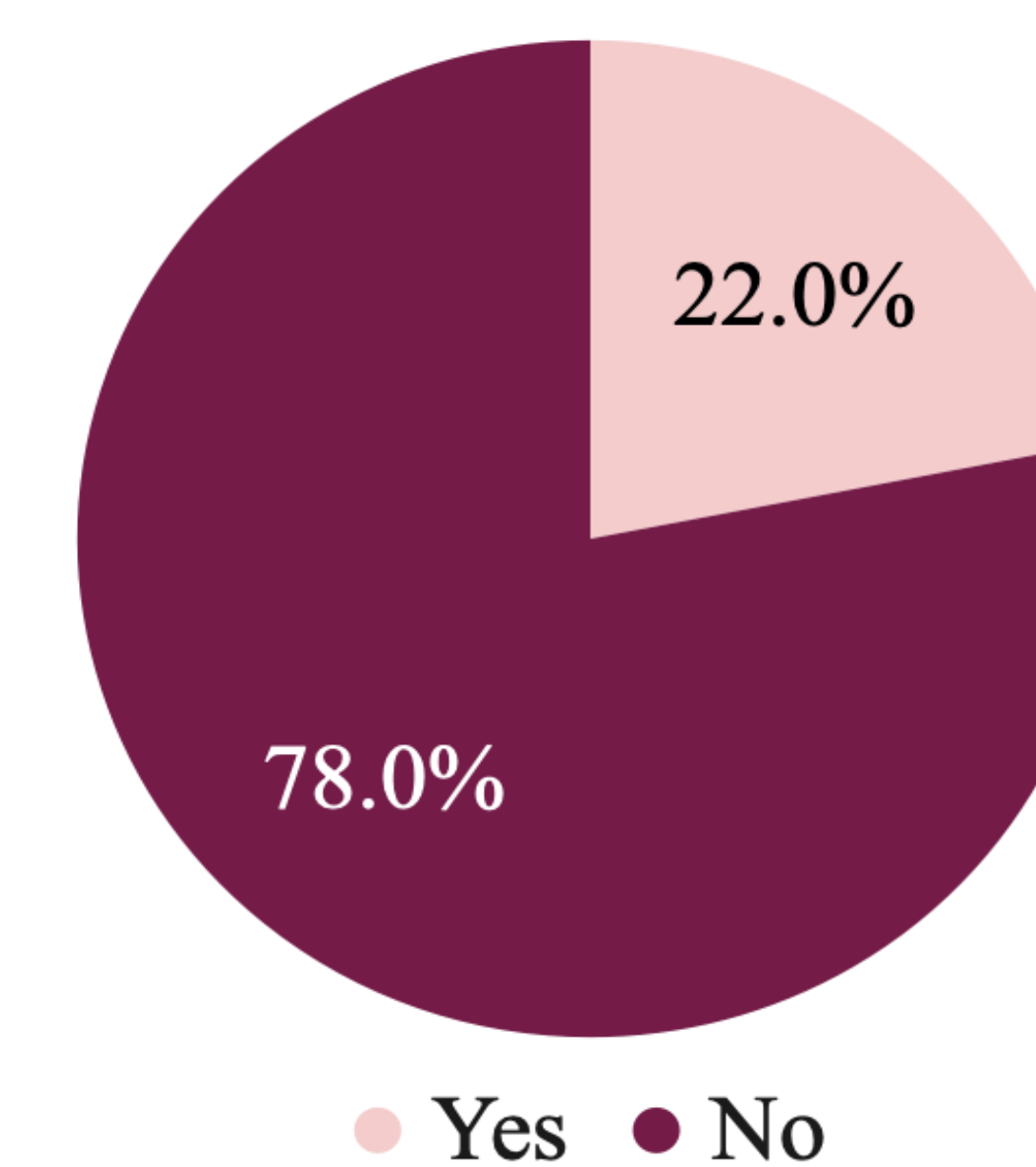


Figure 4. The percentage of women with adequate documentation of their last menstrual cycle out of the women who are prescribed a teratogen.

Discussion

- Like other ambulatory practices, inappropriate prescription of these medications has been observed in the Piedmont Athens Regional (PAR) Clay Community Care Clinic
- As age increases, the number of women prescribed a teratogenic medication increases which may be related to older women being more likely to have multiple comorbidities hence more prescriptions
- Reproductive-aged women seen at the Clay Community Care Clinic who are prescribed these medications are not always screened for teratogenic risk

Conclusions

- Too many reproductive-aged women are on teratogenic medications without appropriate protection
- Efforts are needed to reduce the burden of reproductive-aged women prescribed at-risk medications without appropriate family planning
- Studies to identify reasons for these findings are needed, as well as interventions to address this problem

References

