

Does the unborn child feel pain ?

To order:

Vivere Publications Inc.

15 Main St. North
Montcerf-Lytton, Qc, Canada
J0W 1N0

Toll free: 1-866 445-9695

Fax: 1-866-772-9713

Email: isabelle.begin@sympatico.ca

According to expert neurologists like Dr. Paul Ranalli, who teaches and practises actively in his field in Toronto, the most recent and credible scientific studies on pain in the unborn child show that the child reacts with a motion of avoidance, when touched, as early as eight weeks gestation. In his October 2008 conference, however, Dr Ranalli stated that this reaction could simply be a reflex that does not involve true pain sensation.

Dr. Ranalli continued with the more certain assertion that the unborn child clearly manifests signs of pain perception by 16 weeks gestation, at which point “sub-cortical” connections (that is, located under the outer layer of the brain called “cortex”) are in place.

Dr. Ranalli also indicated that the connections required for pain perception at the level of the thalamus, namely the key organ for pain perception, are in place at the 14th week of gestation.

Dr. Ranalli confirmed that the cortex is not indispensable for pain perception.

Dr. Ranalli added that the theoretical model of sensory pain perception prevailing today according to which neuronal connections are indispensable for pain perception could be totally inadequate. The chemical and hormonal components of pain, amongst other factors, could perhaps play a much more significant role than estimated in the unborn child.

Dr. Ranalli concluded that it is absolutely certain that, whatever moment at which pain perception may begin, the latter is *more acute* than for other people, because the pain modulating system, for its part, is only completely developed at the end of gestation.

The expert to quote on the subject is Dr. K. Anand. See the CPL Web site at www.physiciansforlife.ca.

April 2009

Également disponible en français