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Drugs

NARCOTICS Alphaprodine ("Nisentil") has been used extensively in obstetrics. The respiratory-depressing property of this drug was compared with that of morphine in six male volunteers. Respiratory depression was defined in terms of the displacement of the CO_2 respiratory response curve from the control curve, one of the more sensitive indices of respiratory depression. Alphaprodine caused significant respiratory depression. At the peak of activity, 19 mg. of alphaprodine is equivalent to 10 mg. of morphine. If alphaprodine continues to be of clinical value, its analgesic and respiratory-depressing effects on the mother, and the respiratory impact on the fetus, should be determined more closely by carefully designed and controlled clinical trials. (*Forrest, W. H., and Bellville, J. W.: Respiratory Effects of Alphaprodine in Man, Obstet. Gynec. 31: 61 (Jan.) 1968.*)