

Researchers: big families carry risks

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Researchers at the University of Utah and the Austrian Academy of Sciences say having a large number of children can be hazardous to the health of parents.

The researchers, utilizing data from 21,684 couples married between 1860 and 1895 collected by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, found mothers with 12 or more children faced a risk of premature death five times greater than that of women with three children or less, The Washington Post reported Monday.

While 1.5 percent of the mothers of three died within a year of birthing their youngest child, 6 percent of the mothers with 12 or more children died within the same time frame.

The researchers said fathers in large families also face an increased risk of premature death. A total 2.5 percent of men with 12 or more children died within a year of the final child's birth, compared to slightly less than half of 1 percent of fathers with three children or less.

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