

Here's One Inheritance You Don't Want

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(PhysOrg.com) -- If your mother smoked during her pregnancy, you are more likely to be addicted to nicotine as a young adult.

Smoking during [pregnancy](#) resulted in offspring being more likely to have nicotine dependence or withdrawal at 21 years of age than offspring of mothers who never smoked.

This is the finding of a study published in the August issue of *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*.

Led by Dr Frances O'Callaghan from Griffith University's School of Psychology, the study was based on information from approximately 7,000 [women](#) involved in the Mater Hospital-University of Queensland Study of Pregnancy.

The 21-year study interviewed women at their first antenatal visit to the hospital, several days after delivery, at six months, and at 5, 14 and 21 years. Offspring were also assessed at six months, and at 5, 14 and 21 years.

Of the offspring who were interviewed at 21 years, 25% reported regular smoking, and of these, 65% showed either nicotine dependence or withdrawal.

Other measures that may account for nicotine disorder in [offspring](#), such as [behavioural problems](#), parenting style, family communication and anxiety/depression were also examined, but were less important.

“When we controlled for these characteristics, the relationship between maternal smoking during pregnancy and adult [nicotine](#) disorder remained consistent and significant,” said Dr O’Callaghan.

“The long-term health implications for their children strengthen the argument for mothers to stop smoking during pregnancy.”

“The findings also highlight the need to reinforce measures to help pregnant women and women of childbearing age to stop [smoking](#).”

More information: This article is published in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* (Vol. 33, Issue 4).

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