

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity problems associated with low folate levels in pregnant women

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It has long been suggested that healthy folate (the natural form of folic acid) levels in expectant mothers goes hand in hand with healthy nervous system development in their children. A study published in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* finds that low maternal folate levels is linked to the development of attention-deficit/hyperactivity problems in children at age seven to nine years.

Researcher Dr. Wolff Schlotz points out, "Our findings further support the hypothesis that maternal nutrition contributes to an individuals' development, with potential consequences for their behavior later in life." The long term effects of poor maternal nutrition may even branch out to the child's ability to interact with peers or form [social bonds](#).

The researchers also found that children born from mothers with a low folate status had a notably smaller head circumference at birth, which may indicate a smaller rate of prenatal brain growth in [children](#) adversely affected by low folate levels. This is a cause for concern among low-income populations where the nutritional health of the mother is a low priority, and women are less likely to take folate supplements in advance of pregnancy.

More information: To view the abstract for this article, please visit www3.interscience.wiley.com/jo.../122665861/abstract .

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