

Smoking fathers could lead to early menopausal daughters

June 3 2011, by Deborah Braconnier

According to a study published in *Fertility and Sterility*, men who smoke in the presence of their pregnant partner may be putting their unborn daughter at risk for early menopause by as much as a year. While other research has looked at a woman's own smoking habit and that of her partner playing a role in early menopause and fertility, this is the first time exposure to smoking by an embryo has been examined.

The study, performed by Misao Fukada from the M&K Health Institute in Ako, Japan, looked at over 1,000 postmenopausal Japanese [women](#) while they were at local clinics for gynecologic exams. The women were asked a series of questions including such things as how old they were when they began their menstrual cycle, how old they were when they began [menopause](#), if they or their partner smoked and if either of their parents had smoked when their mother was pregnant.

The average age for the start of menopause among the participants was 51. Results from the study showed that women who had been smokers started menopause around 14 months earlier than non-smoking women. Those women whose husbands smoked entered menopause around five months earlier. Women whose fathers smoked when their mothers were pregnant went through menopause some 13 months sooner. The study was unable to gather enough about mothers smoking while pregnant due to a lack of smoking mothers in the study.

The researchers admit that they are unsure as to whether or not the results from smoking fathers could be linked to the time while the

mothers were pregnant or when the daughters were children. They also found no connection between parental smoking and the beginning of a daughter's menstrual cycle.

The study showed that not enough mothers smoked during pregnancy in order to evaluate if maternal smoking contributed to early menopause. Many studies have looked at maternal smoking and the potential health risks and mothers seem to be quitting or reducing smoking during pregnancy. The hope is this study will be the first of others to show that paternal [smoking](#) during pregnancy can contribute just as much to possible health issues for the unborn child.

More information: [doi:10.1016/j.fertnstert.2011.04.069](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fertnstert.2011.04.069)

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