

# Fear of childbirth increases likelihood of C-section

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A new study published in the international journal *Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavica* (AOGS) reveals that fear of childbirth is a predisposing factor for emergency and elective cesarean sections, even after psychological counseling. This may mean a negative experience that lasts a lifetime among the approximately 3% of women who in this study were estimated to suffer from excessive fear of childbirth.

Led by Professor Gunilla Sydsjo of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University Hospital in Linköping, Central Sweden, researchers analyzed the antenatal and delivery records of 353 women who were referred to a unit for psychosocial [obstetrics and gynecology](#) because of fear of childbirth, and 579 women without fear of childbirth.

The researchers found that fear of childbirth affected obstetric outcomes and increased the frequency of emergency and elective cesarean sections. Induction of delivery was more common among the women with fear of childbirth (16.5%) as compared to the women without this problem (9.6%). Women with fear of childbirth who were scheduled for vaginal delivery were more often delivered by emergency cesareans and they also more often requested elective cesarean delivery.

"Maximal effort is necessary to avoid traumatizing deliveries, ensure early recognition of women with traumatic birth experiences, and provide psychological treatment for [fear](#) of [childbirth](#)," Sydsjo concludes.

Provided by Wiley

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