

Women with PCOS have family heart disease link

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A new study from the University of Adelaide shows the parents of women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) are more likely to have some form of cardiovascular disease.

PCOS is a [hormonal disorder](#) affecting about 10% of women of reproductive age. It is one of the most common endocrine disorders in women and a leading cause of infertility.

The study shows mothers of women with PCOS are more likely to have any form of cardiovascular disease, and almost twice as likely to have [high blood pressure](#), than mothers of other women.

Fathers of women with PCOS are more than twice as likely to have heart disease, and more than four times as likely to have a stroke, than fathers of other women.

The study involved taking family [medical histories](#) from more than 700 women born at Adelaide's Queen Elizabeth Hospital between 1973-1975.

The results of the study will be published today in the online journal [PLoS ONE](#).

"Our results show there is a strong link between [cardiovascular disease](#) in both mother and father and the risk of polycystic [ovary](#) syndrome in their daughters," says the lead author of the study, Associate Professor

Michael Davies from the University of Adelaide's Robinson Institute.

"It suggests that PCOS may be the consequence of a family susceptibility to chronic disease. Further research into the association between the child and parent is therefore needed," he says.

"In Australia alone, about 500,000 women are affected by PCOS. While it is a leading cause of infertility, PCOS also carries with it a wide range of other, serious health complications.

"By further understanding the link between PCOS and other family medical conditions, we might be able to diagnose and treat all of these illnesses at an earlier stage."

Provided by University of Adelaide

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