Prenatal caffeine intake not linked to children's behavior

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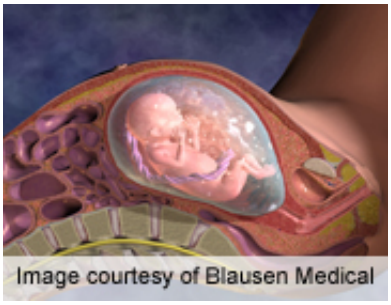

Maternal prenatal caffeine intake is not associated with behavior problems in young children, according to a study published online July 9 in *Pediatrics*.

(HealthDay) -- Maternal prenatal caffeine intake is not associated with behavior problems in young children, according to a study published online July 9 in *Pediatrics*.

Eva M. Loomans, from Tilburg University in the Netherlands, and colleagues conducted a community-based multiethnic prospective study involving 8,202 women who self-reported their caffeine intake (coffee, caffeinated tea, and cola) around the 16th week of gestation. At age 5 to 6 years, 3,439 children had their behavior assessed by both mother and teacher using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Analyses were adjusted for a range of confounding variables, including smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy, maternal age, ethnicity, and education.

The researchers found that there was no correlation between caffeine intake and an increased risk for behavior problems or suboptimal prosocial behavior. There was no evidence of mediation by gestational age or fetal growth restriction, nor was there effect modification based on the child's gender.

"This study has provided insight into what extent caffeine consumption during pregnancy contributes to the development of problem behavior," the authors write. "Our results did not provide evidence to advise pregnant women to reduce their caffeine intake to prevent problem behavior in their children."

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)