

IVF children grow into healthy adults

February 25 2014



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Young adults conceived through IVF and other assisted reproductive technologies (ART) have grown up as healthy individuals, comparing well to those conceived naturally, the world's largest study into ART young adults has found.

The study, published in the international journal *Fertility and Sterility*, showed [young adults](#) who were conceived using ART had similar quality of life to non-ART children along with a normal [body mass index](#) and development. Educational outcomes, including tertiary admission ranked

scores and completion of tertiary education, were also similar between the two groups.

Researchers interviewed 656 mothers who used ART and their 547 young adult offspring aged between 18 and 29 years, and compared this to reports from 868 mothers and their 549 young adult offspring who were conceived without ART.

Study collaborators Professor Jane Fisher and Dr Karin Hammarberg, of Monash University's Jean Hailes Research Unit, led an earlier feasibility project inviting families to participate in the research two decades or more after treatment with assisted [reproductive technologies](#) (ART).

Professor Fisher said the follow-up study was the largest to date of IVF-conceived young adults, and fills a gap in knowledge about the long-term health outcomes of children conceived via ART.

"Its main finding is that most children conceived with ART techniques such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF) grow into healthy young adults, with a quality of life, physical development and educational achievement comparable to those of their non-ART conceived peers," Professor Fisher said.

"As this is the largest study ever of adults who were conceived as a result of IVF we are very keen to study their health into the future. In the next stage we hope to do a clinical review which will tell us more about long-term health after IVF conception."

Both the mothers and the participants completed a report on their health and wellbeing in the first 18 years of life. Mothers reported children had a high rate of hospitalisation in childhood. There was also a higher rate of asthma and hay fever in ART children, there was no evidence for increased rates of attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder amongst ART

children.

The study shows promising evidence that there were no apparent substantial negative long-term health and wellbeing effects on the young adults when ART technologies were utilised to conceive.

Professor Fisher and Dr Hammarberg will now contribute to the translation of the study's findings by incorporating them into accessible resources for people contemplating IVF.

Researchers plan to continue to follow the group and test their own fertility and to continue to evaluate their health status to determine if there are any important lifelong medical or other legacies of ART.

The collaborative study involved researchers from Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, Monash IVF, Melbourne IVF, the University of Melbourne and Monash University.

Provided by Monash University

Citation: IVF children grow into healthy adults (2014, February 25) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-02-ivf-children-healthy-adults.html>

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