

Parental addictions associated with adult children's arthritis

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The adult offspring of parents who were addicted to drugs or alcohol are more likely to have arthritis, according to a new study by University of Toronto researchers.

Investigators examined a group of 13,036 adults and found that 20.4 per cent of respondents had been diagnosed with arthritis by a medical professional. Investigators found that 14.5 per cent of all respondents reported having at least one parent whose drug or alcohol use caused problems while were under the age of 18 and still living at home.

Results indicate that individuals whose parents were addicted to drugs or alcohol are more likely to have arthritis. After adjusting for age, sex, and race, parental addictions were associated with 58 per cent higher odds of arthritis, says lead author Esme Fuller-Thomson, Professor and Sandra Rotman Endowed Chair in the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and the Department of Family and Community Medicine.

"We had anticipated that the adult offspring's [health behaviors](#) such as smoking, obesity and [alcohol consumption](#) might explain the strong link between parental addictions and arthritis, however we did not find this to be the case. Even after adjusting for these adult health behaviors, as well as income, education, a history of childhood maltreatment and mood and anxiety disorders, we found that parental addictions was still a statistically significant factor associated with 30 per cent higher odds of arthritis" explains study co-author and recent MSW graduate, Jessica

Liddycoat.

Future prospective studies are needed because the survey nature of the data makes it impossible to determine whether the relationship between parental addictions and arthritis is causal.

"However, there is ample evidence from other studies to support the provision of efficacious interventions to treat addictions," says coauthor Maria Stefanyk. "Although we do not know if these interventions will impact the development of [arthritis](#) in adulthood, we do know that children do much better on a wide range of outcomes when parents are no longer abusing drugs and [alcohol](#)."

Fuller-Thomson's research appears online this week in the *International Journal of Population Research*.

More information: www.hindawi.com/journals/ijpr/2014/582508/

Provided by University of Toronto

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