

Assisted reproduction not associated with reduced academic performance in adolescence

June 15 2015



Human Embryo. Credit: Ed Uthman, MD/Wikipedia

The academic performance of children conceived by assisted reproduction techniques (ART) is no better or worse than that of spontaneously conceived children when assessed at the ninth grade of their school education. Similarly, ART singletons and ART twins also had comparable test scores, suggesting, say the investigators, that "the higher obstetric risk" identified in ART pregnancies - and particularly in twins - "is not associated with poorer academic performance in adolescence".

"These findings are very important for infertile patients," they add.

Details of the study are reported today at the Annual Meeting of ESHRE by Anne Lærke Spangmose Pedersen, a medical student in the fertility clinic of Copenhagen University Hospital Hvidovre, Denmark. She noted that so far only few studies have explored IQ in ART [children](#), and no previous studies have included ninth grade test scores in a complete national cohort of 15-16-year-old adolescents all conceived by ART.

This, however, was a substantial national study involving every child conceived by ART and born in Denmark between 1995 and 2000, a total of 8251 children born as 4991 singletons and 3260 twins. These children were then compared to two control populations of children - the first comprising all twins born in Denmark during the same period (a total of 10,833) and a randomly selected group of spontaneously conceived singletons (total 10,052).

The study effectively compared the [academic performance](#) of all four groups according to results of a general test of academic performance which all ninth grade students in Denmark (at age 15-16 years) complete. The test grades academic performance from -3 to +12, with average scores of 7. The system of national records and registries in

Denmark with demographic and epidemiological data make such studies possible.

Initial results did show some discrepancies between the groups, but following statistical adjustments maternal age, birth weight, gestational age and social status, the differences disappeared. For example, ART singletons achieved a higher mean test score than spontaneously conceived singletons (7.71 and 6.75 respectively, p

Citation: Assisted reproduction not associated with reduced academic performance in adolescence (2015, June 15) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-06-reproduction-academic-adolescence.html>

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