

Experts stress need for sufficient iodine nutrition during pregnancy

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New research published in *Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavica*, a journal of the Nordic Federation of Societies of Obstetrics and Gynecology, found that pregnant women in Sweden had inadequate levels of iodine in their diets. Proper iodine nutrition is necessary for neurological development of the fetus.

Iodine is an element that is involved in the production of [thyroid hormones](#). Pregnant and breastfeeding women need about 50% more iodine in the diets, and WHO recommends a total daily iodine intake of 250 µg/d for pregnant and lactating women. Medical evidence confirms that moderate to severe iodine deficiency during pregnancy may impair the baby's [neurological development](#).

"The World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that each country assess iodine nutrition in the population every five years," explains lead author Dr. Michaela Granfors with the University Hospital in Uppsala, Sweden. "A recent investigation indicated that iodine status during pregnancy was adequate in only one third of the examined pregnant populations in Europe. Our study investigates iodine nutrition levels in Swedish women during pregnancy."

This cross sectional study included 459 non-smoking, [pregnant women](#) living in two areas of Sweden. Participants were free of thyroid disease and diabetes. The research team collected urine samples in the third trimester of pregnancy to determine iodine levels.

Published results show that the median urinary iodine concentration (UIC) in the study group was 98 µg/l, which is far less than the recommended minimum levels of 150 µg/l. Dr. Granfors said of the findings, "Our research reveals an insufficient iodine intake among Swedish women and highlights a need for targeted interventions that optimize iodine nutrition during pregnancy."

More information: "Iodine deficiency in a study population of pregnant women in Sweden." Michaela Granfors, Maria Andersson, Sara Stinca, Helena Akerud, Alkistis Skalkidou, Inger Sundstrom Poromaa, Anna-Karin Wikstrom and Helena Filipsson Nystrom. *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica*; Published online: August 20, 2015 [DOI: 10.1111/aogs.12713](https://doi.org/10.1111/aogs.12713)

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