

Diabetes during pregnancy associated with increased risk of low milk supply

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A new study shows that women with diabetes during pregnancy face a significantly higher risk of having a low milk supply.

The Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center study, published online in *Breastfeeding Medicine*, adds to evidence that maternal glucose intolerance may impede lactation. Although [insulin resistance](#) is common among obese women, and obesity is a risk factor for poor lactation outcomes, the study is believed to be the first to examine maternal [diabetes](#) as a risk factor for low milk supply.

"This study shows the importance of further research to determine how maternal glucose intolerance may impede lactation, so that targeted therapies may be developed to increase milk supply," says Sarah Riddle, MD, a pediatrician in the Center for Breastfeeding Medicine at Cincinnati Children's and the study's lead author. "There are limited evidence-based strategies for helping mothers to increase milk supply, and low milk supply is often cited as the reason for [new mothers](#) to stop breastfeeding earlier than planned."

The study was conducted using existing [electronic medical records](#) of 641 women who made first visits to the Center for Breastfeeding Medicine between June 1, 2011, and May 31, 2013. All women were no more than 90 days postpartum and highly motivated to breastfeed.

Mothers with a diagnosis of low milk supply but no other lactation problems, such as latching onto the breast, were compared to mothers

with lactation problems but without low milk supply. Nearly 15 percent of those in the first group had a history of diabetes during pregnancy, while just over 6 percent with lactation problems but not low milk supply had maternal diabetes.

Provided by Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

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