

# Childhood measles linked to increased risk of later lung disease

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In a new *Respirology* study, having measles—a highly contagious respiratory infection—during early childhood was linked with an increased risk of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in middle age, but only in adults with asthma and a considerable history of smoking.

While additional research is needed to confirm the findings, scientists speculate that airway damage from childhood measles may predispose an individual to asthma-like symptoms and increased susceptibility to airway obstruction if they also smoked.

"While we have found measles to not have an effect by itself, our findings suggest that infection in [early childhood](#) could contribute to COPD when combined with significant asthma and smoking histories," said lead author Dr. Jennifer Perret, of The University of Melbourne, in Australia.

**More information:** Jennifer L. Perret et al, Childhood measles contributes to post-bronchodilator airflow obstruction in middle-aged adults: A cohort study, *Respirology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/resp.13297](https://doi.org/10.1111/resp.13297)

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