

# Mothers of children born with NAS are more likely to experience mental health problems

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According to a new study, mothers of infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) have a higher prevalence of mental health diagnoses in the first two months postpartum, in comparison to mothers of infants without NAS. Findings from the study will be presented during the Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS) 2018 Meeting in Toronto.

Women with a history of substance use disorders (SUD) have a high incidence of coexisting psychiatric and mood disorders as well as difficulty managing adversity. Such characteristics may affect the ability of pregnant women with histories of SUD to cope with an infant with NAS, particularly one with a protracted [neonatal intensive care](#) unit (NICU) course, exacerbating symptoms of [mental health](#) disorders.

The research data was extracted from Truven Marketscan Commercial Claims and Encounters database from 2005 to 2013. Newborns with NAS were identified using the ICD-9 code 779.5 (drug withdrawal in the newborn). Newborn inclusion criteria included a delivery code, gestational age code or other perinatal code, gestational age of 35 weeks or greater, known discharge status and linkage to mother's records. Maternal inclusion criteria were inpatient claim indicating delivery of newborn and continuous enrollment nine months prior to and one year after delivery. Infants with significant medical diseases were excluded. Researchers matched each mother of a newborn with NAS to a mother of a newborn without NAS on age at delivery, birth year, [gestational age](#), NICU stay and maternal mental health outcomes in the nine months prior to [delivery](#).

The study found 338 mother-infant pairs met all inclusion and exclusion criteria and were matched to one control, and 246 (73 percent) of the infants with NAS had a NICU stay. Median length of stay for these infants was 10 days compared to three days for [infants](#) with no admission to the NICU (p

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