

Father's obesity in early puberty doubles asthma-risk for future offspring

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An international EU-study (ALEC), including researchers from the Centre for International Health at the University of Bergen, has shown that the period between the age of eight and puberty is particularly important for lung health later in life.

"If one gains a lot of weight during this period, it doubles the risk of having asthma later in life, for both sexes, but for the boys the risk also doubles for his future [offspring](#)" says Ph.D., Marianne Lønnebotn, at Department of Global Public Health and Primary Care, University of Bergen. She is first

The researchers analysed questionnaire data from 3 018 adult offspring (age 18-50) and their 2 153 fathers (age 39-66) participating in the RHINESSA/RHINE generation study in 10 ECRHS centres in North Europe, Spain and Australia.

The results are presented 18. September, at the ERS International Congress 2018, in Paris.

Period of development

The study also showed that the asthma risk was not related to weight gain before or after puberty.

"There is a lot going on in the body between childhood and adult. All the

organs are developing. Being overweight may lead to an overall inflammation in the body, which may interfere with the development of the organs in this period," says Professor Cecilie Svanes at Centre of International Health, UiB. Svanes supervised and led the study.

"I think that the result concerning a boy's future offspring, has something to do with interrupting the transformation of germ cells to sperm cells, in this period."

Important period for development

Early puberty seems to be an important period for avoiding [health](#) problems later in life, not only for oneself, but also, in the case of boys, for their future offspring. These findings indicate that it is very important to lead a healthy life-style during this time period.

"The number of obese children in [early puberty](#) has increased in Europe. It is therefore important to ensure that children are eating healthier meals and having more physical activity. This could for example happen in schools and in the forming of urban space," says Cecilie Svanes.

Provided by University of Bergen

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