

Do magazines exaggerate fertility at advanced reproductive age?

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A new study has shown that popular magazines commonly feature older pregnant celebrities on their covers with no mention of the risks of advanced maternal age pregnancy or the advanced reproductive technologies and methods needed to achieve these pregnancies. By downplaying fertility decline with advancing age, these magazines likely contribute to women's belief that they can safely put off pregnancy until later ages. The study is published in *Journal of Women's Health*.

"Age is Just a Number': How Celebrity-Driven Magazines Misrepresent Fertility at Advanced Reproductive Ages" was coauthored by Stephanie Willson, MD, New York University School of Medicine and New York Presbyterian—Weill Cornell Medical Center, Allison Perelman, New York University School of Medicine, and Kara Goldman, MD, New York University Langone Fertility Center and Northwestern University Fertility and Reproductive Medicine

The researchers examined 416 magazine issues aimed at reproductive-aged women and found that fertility was highlighted on one-third of the covers, which included the mention of 240 different celebrities. More than half were of advanced maternal age (AMA), but there were only two mentions of [pregnancy](#) risks associated with (AMA). A third of the AMA pregnancies were among celebrities aged 40 or older, yet in the accompanying articles there was little or no discussion of the need for advanced interventions to achieve pregnancy, such as in vitro fertilization and the need for donor gametes.

"It's easy to get drawn in by the cover of a popular [magazine](#) featuring a happily pregnant celebrity in her late 30s or early 40s and to think that fertility is the norm at that stage in a woman's reproductive life," says Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health*, Executive Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA, and President of the Academy of Women's Health. "Often left unsaid though are the costly and

extraordinary measures, assisted reproductive technologies, and risks associated with these later-in-life pregnancies."

More information: Stephanie F. Willson et al, "Age is Just a Number": How Celebrity-Driven Magazines Misrepresent Fertility at Advanced Reproductive Ages, *Journal of Women's Health* (2019). [DOI: 10.1089/jwh.2018.7433](https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2018.7433)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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