Study IDs pregnancy complications in the U.S. tied to the pandemic

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(HealthDay)—The COVID-19 pandemic is associated with an increased

risk for several adverse pregnancy outcomes among commercially insured pregnant women, according to a research letter published online Oct. 15 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Shengzhi Sun, Ph.D., from Boston University School of Public Health, and colleagues assessed changes in the rates of pregnancy complications associated with the pandemic period among pregnant U.S. women with commercial health insurance. The OptumLabs Data Warehouse was used to identify 152,903 deliveries during the defined COVID-19 pandemic period (March 1 to Dec. 31, 2020) and 172,095 deliveries during the same period in 2019.

The researchers found that the most common documented adverse outcome was premature rupture of membranes (10.3 percent of deliveries), followed by gestational diabetes (9.3 percent) and gestational hypertension (8.5 percent). Compared with the same period in the previous year, the defined pandemic period was associated with a statistically significantly higher risk for gestational diabetes (relative risk [RR], 1.12), gestational hypertension (RR, 1.07), poor fetal growth (RR, 1.07), and preeclampsia (RR, 1.04).

"Our study provides novel evidence of the association of the pandemic with the risk of complications that have rarely been documented, including gestational hypertension, poor fetal growth, and preeclampsia," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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