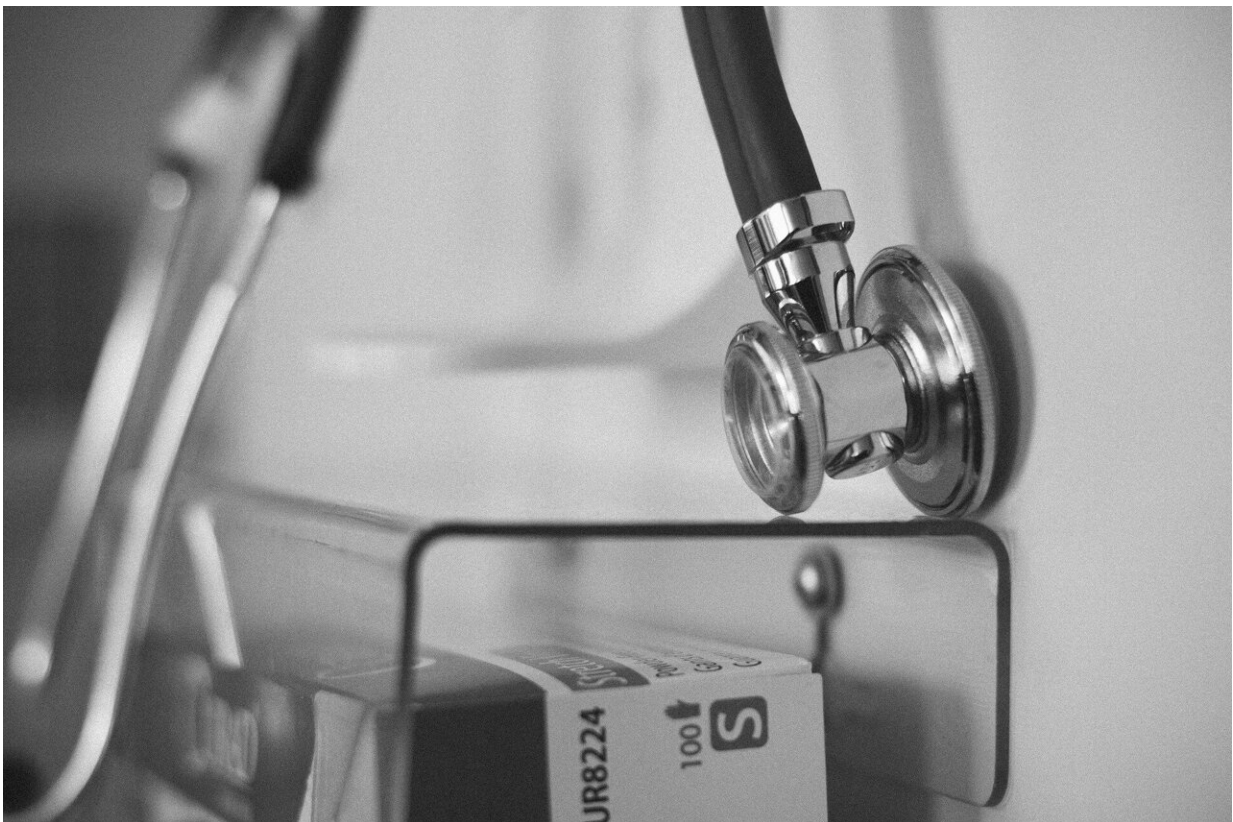


Does taking traditional Chinese medicine during pregnancy increase the risk of birth defects?

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New research published in *Acta Obstetricia et Gynecologica Scandinavica* has revealed a link between the use of traditional Chinese medicine

during pregnancy and congenital malformations, including heart defects, in children.

In the prospective study, 16,751 women who received obstetrics care from hospitals in China completed a survey on their use of traditional Chinese medicine before and during pregnancy. Among fetuses, there were 273 congenital malformations.

Fetuses exposed to traditional Chinese medicine had 2.1-times higher odds of developing congenital malformations compared with those without exposure. There were significant associations with [congenital malformations](#) in women with early pregnant use of traditional Chinese medicine and for those who used two or more types of these products.

"To improve traditional Chinese medicine, we should pay more attention to its hazards —especially the identification of teratogenic ingredients—while also evaluating its [therapeutic effects](#)," said corresponding author Jiang-Nan Wu, of Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital of Fudan University, in China.

More information: Maternal traditional Chinese medicine exposure and risk of congenital malformations: a multicentre prospective cohort study, *Acta Obstetrica Et Gynecologica Scandinavica* (2023). [DOI: 10.1111/aogs.14553](#)

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