

Fewer births on weekends and holidays than weekdays, data analysis of births from 1979–2018 in Japan shows

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A newborn baby. Credit: christianabella, Pixabay, CC0
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Significantly more babies were born on a weekday instead of weekend

day or holiday, reveals a large-scale analysis of 21 million births in Japan over almost four decades published February 14, 2024 in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* by Miho Sassa from the University of Tokyo, Japan, and colleagues.

Medical resources are generally stretched during holidays (including weekends) due to factors like staffing and hospital policies. This may amplify [holiday](#) effects: [disparities](#) and variations of health outcomes between holidays and weekdays. Dr. Sassa and colleagues studied this holiday effect with a focus on [birth](#), especially high-risk births as measured by [babies](#) born preterm and/or with a low birthweight.

The authors used birth certificate data from over 21 million individuals born from 1979–2018 (which included birthday, birthweight, and gestational age) to categorize individuals into five groups: low birthweight (

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