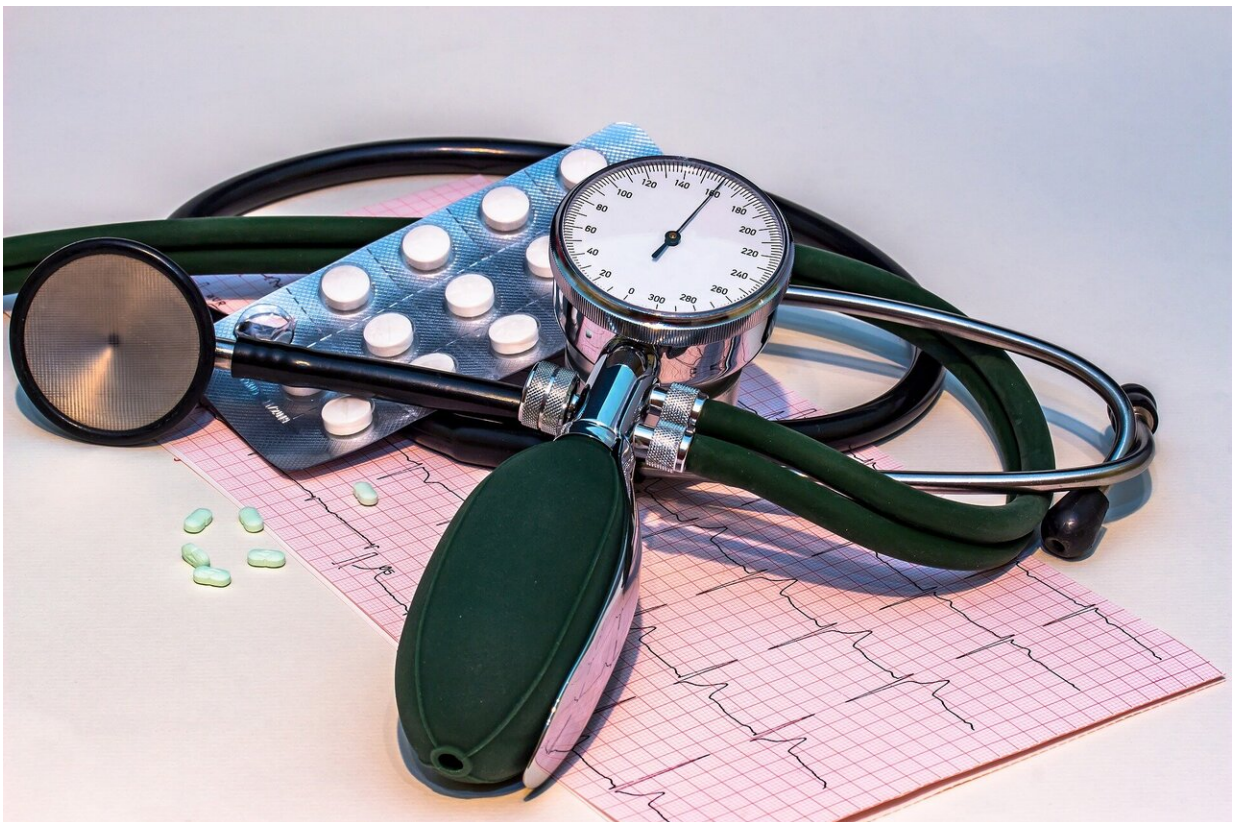


New study finds that pregnancy complications can also affect child's health later in life

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Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDP) and gestational diabetes (GDM) are two of the most common pregnancy complications and put

pregnant people at increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease later in life.

Now, in a new study to be presented today at the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine's (SMFM) [annual meeting](#), [The Pregnancy Meeting](#), researchers will unveil findings that suggest these [pregnancy](#) complications may also result in worse cardiovascular health for the child.

The abstract was [published](#) in the January 2024 supplement of the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*.

In a secondary analysis of 3,317 maternal-child pairings from the prospective Hyperglycemia and Adverse Pregnancy Outcome Follow-up Study (HAPO FUS), researchers examined whether there was a connection between hypertensive disorders of pregnancy and gestational diabetes and a child's cardiovascular health.

On the maternal side, 8% developed [high blood pressure](#) during pregnancy, 12% developed [gestational diabetes](#), and 3% developed both high blood pressure and diabetes.

Researchers then examined the child's cardiovascular health 10 to 14 years after delivery. Cardiovascular health was evaluated based on four metrics: [body mass index](#), blood pressure, total cholesterol, and glucose level. Pediatric guidelines categorized each metric as ideal, intermediate, or poor. Researchers found that before the age of 12 (median age: 11.6), more than half of the children (55.5%) had at least one metric that was non-ideal, which puts them at greater risk of heart disease and stroke.

"These findings are important because traditionally, the thinking has been that a person's risk of developing [cardiovascular disease](#) starts after birth—that everyone starts at the same point," says the study's lead

author Kartik K. Venkatesh, MD, Ph.D., a maternal-fetal medicine subspecialist and assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology and assistant professor of epidemiology, and Director of the Diabetes in Pregnancy Program at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center in Columbus. "These data suggest that's not the case and that what happens in the womb can affect the child across their lifespan."

More information: Kartik Kailas Venkatesh et al, 2 Association between HDP and GDM and Child Cardiovascular Health in Early Adolescence, *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* (2024). DOI: [10.1016/j.ajog.2023.11.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2023.11.016). [linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve ... ii/S0002937823008189](https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0002937823008189)

Provided by Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

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