

More studies needed to determine impact of air pollution on gynecologic health

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While initial studies suggest a potential relationship between air pollution and both infertility and menstrual irregularity, researchers from Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) believe more studies are needed to validate these findings in other populations.

Air pollution is widely known to affect human cardiopulmonary [health](#), but only recently has research turned to understand the association between [air pollution](#) and reproductive health and gynecologic disease incidence.

Using an online search of medical publications, BUSM researchers sought to identify recent studies that evaluated air pollution exposures and these gynecologic diseases: infertility, menstrual irregularity, uterine fibroids and endometriosis. "After examining the limited literature we found early and preliminary data between air pollution and both infertility and menstrual irregularity," said corresponding author Shruthi Mahalingaiah, MD, MS, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at BUSM. "However, given the sparse amount of research, it is imperative that these findings be further explored," added Mahalingaiah, who also is an assistant professor of epidemiology at Boston University School of Public Health and an obstetrician/gynecologist at Boston Medical Center.

Mahalingaiah believes women's health and fertility outcomes are important to include in policy guidelines regarding air [pollution](#) and human health. "Because of the implications on human populations via

reproductive health, this topic area is critically important to support with dedicated funding opportunities."

The findings appear in the journal *Current Epidemiology Reports*.

More information: Shruthi Mahalingaiah et al, Impacts of Air Pollution on Gynecologic Disease: Infertility, Menstrual Irregularity, Uterine Fibroids, and Endometriosis: a Systematic Review and Commentary, *Current Epidemiology Reports* (2018). [DOI: 10.1007/s40471-018-0157-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40471-018-0157-9)

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