

# Women physicians delay childbearing versus nonphysicians

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(HealthDay)—Compared with nonphysicians, women physicians delay

childbearing, with median age at first childbearing of 32 and 27 years, respectively, according to a study published online May 3 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Maria C. Cusimano, M.D., from the University of Toronto, and colleagues conducted a population-based cohort study involving [reproductive-aged women](#) (15 to 50 years) in Ontario, Canada, accrued from Jan. 1, 1995, to Nov. 28, 2018. Outcomes were compared for 5,238 licensed physicians and 26,640 nonphysicians.

The researchers found that compared with nonphysicians, physicians were less likely to experience childbirth at younger ages (hazard ratio for childbirth at 15 to 28 years, 0.15) and initiated childbearing significantly later; the cumulative incidence of childbirth was 5 percent at 28.6 and 19.4 years in physicians and nonphysicians, respectively. The likelihood of experiencing childbirth at older ages was significantly increased for physicians (hazard ratios, 1.35 and 2.62 for 29 to 36 years and  $\geq 37$  years, respectively); ultimately, a similar cumulative probability of childbirth was achieved for physicians and nonphysicians. The [median age](#) at first childbirth was 32 and 27 years for physicians and nonphysicians, respectively. At all observed ages, the cumulative incidence of childbirth was higher in [family physicians](#) than in surgical and nonsurgical specialists.

"System-level interventions are required to support women physicians who wish to have children at all career stages," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to UpToDate.

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