

# Lupus may contribute to pregnancy-related complications

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A new study found that lupus during pregnancy may have negative health impacts for women and their babies. The study included 13,598 Swedish women in their first pregnancy, and all were singleton pregnancies. Preeclampsia, hypothyroid disease, stroke, and infection were more common among women with lupus. Sixteen percent of pregnant women with lupus were diagnosed with preeclampsia compared with 5% from the general population. Among the women with subclinical lupus who later developed the condition after pregnancy, preeclampsia was found in 26% of women who developed lupus within 2 years post-partum and 13% for those who developed it 2 to 5 years post-partum.

Similarly, infant outcomes, such as preterm birth, infection, and mortality, were worse among those born to mothers with [lupus](#) and subclinical lupus during pregnancy.

"Our findings suggest that immunologic activity, such as autoantibodies, contribute to these complications even in the absence of a clinical diagnosis of lupus," said Dr. Julia Simard, senior author of the *Arthritis Care & Research* article. "We are now trying to understand not only how this might impact the time to lupus diagnosis but also what we can learn about outcomes such as preeclampsia or preterm birth more generally."

**More information:** Elizabeth V. Arkema et al. What to expect when expecting with SLE: A population-based study of maternal and fetal outcomes in SLE and pre-SLE, *Arthritis Care & Research* (2015). [DOI: 10.1002/acr.22791](https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.22791)

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