

# Polycystic ovary syndrome increases risk for gestational diabetes and hypertensive disorders

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A recent study by researchers at McGill University has identified polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) as an independent risk factor for gestational diabetes and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. The condition, known to lead to multiple reproductive complications, including infertility, affects one in 10 women of childbearing age.

PCOS was already known for its association to other adverse perinatal conditions, such as insulin resistance. However, there remains significant gaps in understanding the correlation between the syndrome and neonatal complications.

"We discovered that PCOS is a risk factor for morbidity in pregnancy," explained Dr. Michael Dahan, Assistant Professor in McGill's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and lead author of the study. "We are now able to precisely determine the relative risk in pregnancy related to the disease process itself by controlling for underlying conditions, which previous studies were unable to

do."

## Researcher used data from more than nine million pregnancies

Using the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project Nationwide Inpatient Sample (HCUP-NIS) database, which compiles over 9 million pregnancies and births, researchers from McGill were able to establish links between [pregnant women](#) with PCOS and the prevalence of pregnancy hypertension, thyroid disease, obesity and pregestational and gestational diabetes.

Additionally, the researchers also found that pregnant women with PCOS were more likely to have undergone IVF treatment and had increased rates of congenital anomalies in their offspring as opposed to their non-PCOS counterparts.

"PCOS is the most common hormonal condition among reproductive age women," Dahan says. "It is important to consider the risk of other co-existing conditions frequently encountered in women with PCOS, as these risks are additive and place them at a significantly increased risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes."

Further research will be undertaken to investigate the role of specific interventions in PCOS on modifying risk in pregnancy and delivery.

"Polycystic ovary syndrome as an [independent risk factor](#) for [gestational diabetes](#) and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy: a population-based study on 9.1 million pregnancies" by Michael Dahan and al. was published in *Human Reproduction*.

**More information:** Ginevra Mills et al. Polycystic ovary syndrome as an independent risk factor for gestational diabetes and hypertensive disorders of

pregnancy: a population-based study on 9.1 million pregnancies, *Human Reproduction* (2020). DOI: [10.1093/humrep/deaa099](https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/deaa099)

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