

[IMAGE]

Your Weight Affects Your Baby - Even Before They Are Born

By Editorial Staff

Yes, your body-mass index (essentially a general measure of body size based on height and weight) can impact the health of your child – even before your baby is born. In fact, according to recent research, children of women whose BMI is higher before delivery are more likely to have higher blood pressure and other cardiovascular risk factors at 4-6 years of age compared with children of women with lower BMI.

Published in *JAMA Network Open*, a publication of the American Medical Association, the study evaluated 240 mother-child pairs, gathering information on pre-pregnancy body-mass index in mothers and multiple health variables in their children at ages 4-6 years (birth weight, BMI, waist circumference, blood pressure, and "retinal microcirculation"). A mother's pre-pregnancy BMI influenced her child's cardiovascular risk factors, such as blood pressure, in early life *independent* of other variables that might elevate CVD risk, such as the child's weight, waist circumference, etc.

The researchers make the significance of their finding crystal clear: "Considering that blood pressure tracks from childhood into adulthood [in other words, children with high blood pressure are more likely to have high blood pressure in adulthood] and microvascular changes may be early markers of cardiometabolic disease development, our results suggest that maternal prepregnancy BMI is an important modifiable risk factor for later-life cardiovascular health of the offspring."

body mass index - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Body-mass index has been critiqued at times as an inaccurate reflection of body weight from a health perspective because it fails to differentiate between, for example, a 6-foot, 185-pound man who never exercises and a same-height, same-weight professional athlete. However, BMI does mean something. If your BMI is off the charts, you probably know it, and you also probably know losing weight would improve your health. If you're pregnant or trying to conceive a child, a high BMI might not just affect you negatively; it could put your child at risk down the road. Make sure you maintain a healthy weight that keeps your BMI in the normal range (as opposed to overweight or obese) – for your sake and the sake of your baby.

Page printed from:

http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=2769&no_paginate=true&no_b=true