

## Having children may cause your cells to age faster than normal

Women who give birth may be biologically “older” than women who don’t, a new study suggests.

For the study, the researchers analyzed information from 1,556 U.S. women ages 20 to 44 who took part in a national survey from 1999 to 2002, which involved giving blood samples.

The researchers looked at...the length of their [telomeres](#)...[which] naturally shorten as people age...Telomeres are considered a marker of biological age....

Women in the survey who said they’d [given birth](#) to at least one child had telomeres that were about 4 percent shorter, on average, than those of women who’d never given birth. The findings held even after the researchers took into account other factors that could affect telomere length, including the women’s chronological age, body mass index and smoking habits.

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“It is possible that pregnancy, birth and child-rearing can induce chronic stress, leading to shorter telomere length perhaps through an inflammatory pathway,” study researcher Anna Pollack, an assistant professor and environmental and reproductive epidemiologist at George Mason University, in Fairfax, Virginia....

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Do Kids Take Years Off Your Life? Giving Birth May Make Cells ‘Older’](#)**