

## Increase in autism linked to rising maternal obesity and diabetes

More and more children around the world are being born to obese mothers than ever before. In the United States, 23.4 percent of women are obese before they become pregnant—a number that represents a growing phenomenon.

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The increasingly common condition has been associated with children being born obese as well as showing a greater risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, cognitive and behavioral difficulties, and other neurodevelopmental disorders. Incidentally, a growing numbers of children are being diagnosed with mental disorders, with up to one in five children in the US experiencing conditions that challenge their mental health in any single year.

This summer alone, multiple studies have found that different facets of moms' metabolic health and weight are linked with a greater risk for children being diagnosed with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and mild neurodevelopmental problems.

In June, [Thomas Buchanan](#) of the University of Southern Carolina and his colleagues [reported](#) how expectant mothers' diabetes—experienced by one in 16 pregnant women in the US—is tied to a baby's chances developing autism. The researchers found a clear divide: Mothers with a diabetes diagnosis by their 26th week of pregnancy gave birth to children with a higher likelihood of being on the autism spectrum compared to mothers with no diabetes or who received a diagnosis after their 26th week.

**Read full, original post:** [Maternal Obesity and Diabetes Linked to Autism in Children](#)