

Insulin sensitivity lower in adults born preterm

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(HealthDay)—Middle-aged adults who were born preterm, even moderately preterm (32 to 36 weeks' gestation), are less insulin sensitive compared with adults who were born at term, according to research published in the October issue of *Diabetes*.

Sarah Mathai, M.D., of the University of Auckland in New Zealand, and colleagues conducted a study involving 52 adults aged 34 to 38 years (31 had been born preterm) and 61 of their children (37 born of preterm parents) to evaluate whether there is a relationship between insulin sensitivity and β -cell function in adults born preterm and their children.

The researchers found that, compared with adults born at term, those

born preterm were less insulin sensitive, regardless of sex. This association remained even after excluding those who had been born prior to 32 weeks' gestation. β -cell function was normal in these adults. However, children born to adults who were preterm did not display [insulin resistance](#).

"In conclusion, adults born even moderately preterm (32 to 36 weeks' gestation) have an isolated reduction in insulin sensitivity but normal β -cell function. There was no evidence of impaired [glucose metabolism](#) in their children," the authors write. "Because the rate of preterm birth is rising, with the majority born only moderately preterm, the associated reduced [insulin sensitivity](#) in adults born preterm is likely to pose a substantial [public health](#) burden in the future."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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