

# Depression during and after pregnancy may affect children's development

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Maternal depressive symptoms during pregnancy, in the first year postpartum, and in early childhood were linked with poorer child neurodevelopment in a recent *Depression & Anxiety* study.

In the study that included 2231 mothers, higher average maternal

depressive symptoms during and after pregnancy predicted lower total developmental milestones, fine and [gross motor skills](#), communication, problem solving, and personal/social skills when they were assessed in children aged 1.9 to 5.7 years.

"Our findings further suggest that antenatal and post-pregnancy depression have both independent and additive effects on neurodevelopment. Children of mothers with the most chronic and severe depressive symptoms during and after [pregnancy](#) had the most neurodevelopmental disadvantages," said co-lead author Dr. Marius Lahti-Pulkkinen, of the University of Helsinki, in Finland.

**More information:** Soile Tuovinen et al, Maternal depressive symptoms during and after pregnancy and child developmental milestones, *Depression and Anxiety* (2018). [DOI: 10.1002/da.22756](https://doi.org/10.1002/da.22756)

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