

Drinking Alcohol During Pregnancy Could Lead to Acute Myeloid Leukemia in Children

AACR

Despite public health warnings, drinking is still high among pregnant women. AML risk increased 56 percent among children of those who drank alcohol.

PHILADELPHIA - Although acute myeloid leukemia (AML) is relatively rare in children, drinking alcohol during pregnancy could increase the risk, according to a recent paper published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

Julie Ross, Ph.D., director of the division of pediatric epidemiology and clinical research at the University of Minnesota, said there are about 700 cases of AML in the United States in children each year.

"Its quite rare, so we want to be careful about worrying parents too much," said Ross, who was not involved in the study, but is an editorial board member of *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*.

Ross and the lead researcher of this study, Paule Latino-Martel, Ph.D., research director at the Research Center for Human Nutrition in France, agreed that these findings should strengthen the public health recommendation against alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

"Despite the current recommendation that pregnant women should not drink alcohol during pregnancy, alcohol consumption during pregnancy is 12 percent in the United States, 30 percent in Sweden, 52 percent in France, 59 percent in Australia and 60 percent in Russia," said Latino-Martel.

Latino-Martel and colleagues analyzed 21 case control studies. Alcohol intake during pregnancy, defined as a response to a yes or no question, was associated with a 56 percent increased risk of AML in children. The risk of AML was higher in children aged 0 to 4 years old at diagnosis. There was no significant association with acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

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The mission of the American Association for Cancer Research is to prevent and cure cancer. Founded in 1907, the AACR is the worlds oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research. The membership includes 31,000 basic, translational and clinical researchers; health care professionals; and cancer survivors and advocates in the United States and more than 90 other

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countries. The AACR marshals the full spectrum of expertise from the cancer community to accelerate progress in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer through high-quality scientific and educational programs. It funds innovative, meritorious research grants, research fellowship and career development awards. The AACR Annual Meeting attracts more than 17,000 participants who share the latest discoveries and developments in the field. Special conferences throughout the year present novel data across a wide variety of topics in cancer research, treatment and patient care. The AACR publishes six major peer-reviewed journals: *Cancer Research*; *Clinical Cancer Research*; *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics*; *Molecular Cancer Research*; *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*; and *Cancer Prevention Research*. The AACR also publishes *CR*, a magazine for cancer survivors and their families, patient advocates, physicians and scientists. *CR* provides a forum for sharing essential, evidence-based information and perspectives on progress in cancer research, survivorship and advocacy.

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