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## [Paracetamol use in pregnancy linked to ADHD](#)



By [Dr David Moore](#), 3 March 2014

Although media outlets like to lead with attention-grabbing headlines, we need to be careful not

An interesting [article published recently in JAMA Pediatrics](#) which observed an association between paracetamol use in  
s u c h a s

However, it is important to remember that statistical associations do not prove causation. Although this is a very large, pr  
not all potential confounders (i.e. things that can influence results other than a true causal relationship between parace  
The researchers were careful to control their data for things like fevers and infections (as recalled by the women), but ca  
take paracetamol, and therefore can't account for the potential interactions between these and risk of ADHD; develop  
genetic predisposition, non-inherited factors and, potentially, environmental exposures. Other conditions that have simil  
to migraines or pain syndromes (which could not all be accounted for in a study of this design) are also reasons why  
relationships become a little difficult

An important lesson in effects of study design was demonstrated by the Womens' Health Initiative HRT trials - while c  
protect women from heart disease, follow-up data from randomised trials showed the opposite - HRT increased cardiova  
paracetamol is used, such as fever, are known to be harm

So, while this study has provided some important information, more study will be required, along with subsequent risk-be  
recommend avoiding paracetamol in pregnancy.

### About Dr David Moore



*David is a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, a  
Queensland. He is highly skilled in the management of complex and high-risk pregnancies, and has special  
endometriosis, pelvic floor and incontinence surgery. David has completed a Master of Reproductive Medi  
management of fertility problems, and can offer the full range of assisted reproductive treatments. He is a  
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