

Birth Defect Gastroschisis Is on the Rise

The CDC reports a frightening birth defect, gastroschisis, is on the rise both worldwide and in the United States. Its cause is unknown.

What is Gastroschisis?

Gastroschisis is birth defect that occurs when the muscles of the abdominal wall fail to form correctly and a hole (large or small) results. The infant is born with intestines and sometimes other organs outside of the body.

In addition to the necessary corrective surgery, the infant may be challenged with damage to the intestines. Exposure to amniotic fluid in utero can cause the intestines to shorten, twist, or swell. Children with large protrusions or multiple organ exposure may require several surgeries to correct the defect. Gastroschisis increases the risk of medical complications and mortality. Long-term complications include digestive issues and difficulty absorbing nutrients.

What Is the Cause of Gastroschisis?

The cause is unknown and the reason for the rise in this defect is also unknown. The CDC reports, "A 2008 review noted that risk factors associated with gastroschisis, after adjusting for maternal age, have included lower socioeconomic status, lower body mass index and other indicators of poor nutrition (lower intake of high-quality nutrients and dietary fats), smoking, use of illicit drugs, alcohol, or analgesic medications, and genitourinary infections. Additionally, among multiparous and multigravida mothers, a change in paternity since the previous pregnancy has been associated with

gastroschisis. Studies have also indicated possible age-specific associations between gastroschisis and prior pregnancy loss, as well as with certain infections.”

But these factors do not always apply. Megan Lehman shared the following on Facebook: (Quoted with permission)

I have always wondered what caused my precious baby boy to be born with this condition, and let me tell you, it was not alcohol, drugs, or poverty that they are now discovering increases the risk. What I did do, and very early on in my pregnancy before young and stupid me knew better, was ride on a tractor while my husband worked the fields on his family farm.”

...expectant mothers need to be warned of pesticides, chemicals in our foods, and maybe even in the prenatal vitamins that we take so carefully. An increase in incidence means something is causing it and likely many other issues as well.”

How Prevalent Is Gastroschisis?

The prevalence of gastroschisis has been on the rise since the 1980s and has risen in every category of race/ethnicity and maternal age group. Collected data showed the number of cases doubled during 1995–2005 compared to earlier reports. Reports comparing 1995-2005 with 2006-2012 show another 30% increase. Prevalence has risen from 3.6 per 10,000 births to 4.9 per 10,000 births. (Based on data collected from 14 states’ surveillance programs.)

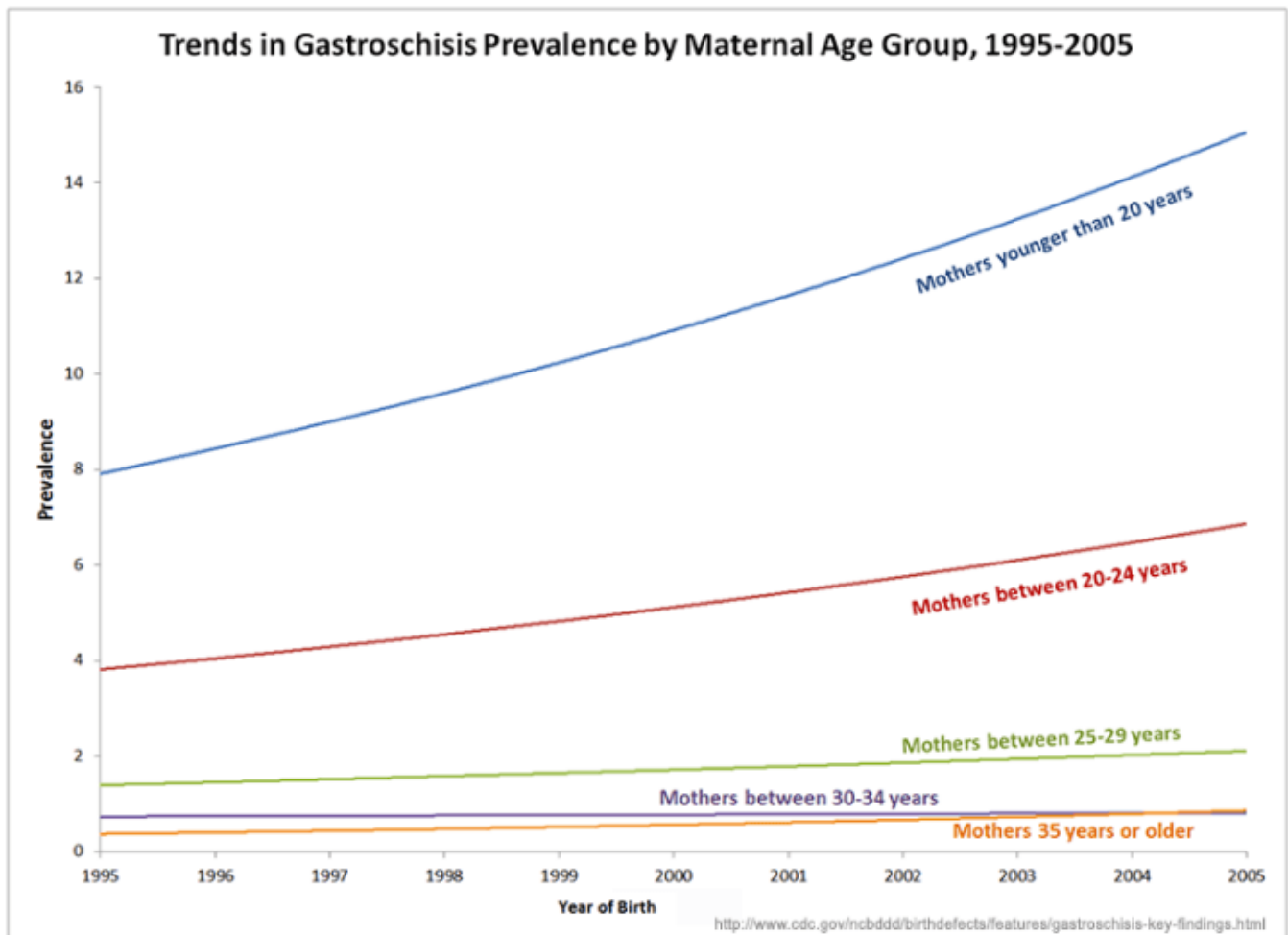
Over the past 30 years, Utah has seen a ten-fold increase in gastroschisis” – IBIS

During the period 1995- 2012 the increased was:

- 68% for infants born to young white mothers less than 20

years old.

- 268% for infants born to young black mother less than 20 years old.



This alarming increase in prevalence among young black mothers does not denote higher overall numbers in this racial group. White and Hispanic young mothers report higher overall incidences.

Incidence Per 10,000 Births by State

- Arizona – 5.5 per 10,000 births (1:1818)
- Arkansas – 6.3 per 10,000 births (1:1587)
- California – 5.4 per 10,000 births (1:1852)
- Colorado – 4.4 per 10,000 births (1:2273)
- Delaware – 6.1 per 10,000 births (1:1639)

- Florida – 4.4 per 10,000 births (1:2273)
- Georgia – 4.5 per 10,000 births (1:2222)
- Illinois – 4.0 per 10,000 births (1:2500)
- Indiana – 4.5 per 10,000 births (1:2222)
- Iowa – 5.1 per 10,000 births (1:1961)
- Kansas – 5.0 per 10,000 births (1:2000)
- Kentucky – 3.6 per 10,000 births (1:2778)
- Louisiana – 5.0 per 10,000 births (1:2000)
- Maine – 6.2 per 10,000 births (1:1613)
- Maryland – 5.1 per 10,000 births (1:1961)
- Massachusetts – 3.5 per 10,000 births (1:2857)
- Michigan – 1.7 per 10,000 births (1:5882)
- Minnesota – 3.8 per 10,000 births (1:2632)
- Mississippi – 2.9 per 10,000 births (1:3448)
- Nebraska – 5.6 per 10,000 births (1:1786)
- New Hampshire – 2.2 per 10,000 births (1:4545)
- New Jersey – 2.2 per 10,000 births (1:4545)
- New York – 2.4 per 10,000 births (1:4167)
- North Carolina – 4.4 per 10,000 births (1:2273)
- North Dakota – 9.0 per 10,000 births (1:1111)
- Oklahoma – 6.5 per 10,000 births (1:1538)
- Puerto Rico – 5.1 per 10,000 births (1:1961)
- Rhode Island – 4.2 per 10,000 births (1:2381)
- South Carolina – 1.2 per 10,000 births (1:8333)
- Tennessee – 5.7 per 10,000 births (1:1754)
- Texas – 5.9 per 10,000 births (1:1695)
- Utah – 5.1 per 10,000 births (1:1961)
- Vermont – 2.5 per 10,000 births (1:4000)
- Virginia – 1.3 per 10,000 births (1:7692)

* States not listed did not report to the study or did not report gastroschisis numbers.

Statistics listed copied with permission from the Avery's Angels Gastroschisis Foundation website. Their cited source is the National Birth Defects Prevention Network October 2013, Birth Defects Research Part A, Clinical And Molecular

Teratology Vol. 97 Number 10, and the 2013 Congenital Malformation Surveillance Report.

Conclusion

We do not know what is causing this birth defect, but we do know our ever-increasing chemical exposure is wreaking havoc on our health and that chemical exposure including pesticide exposure causes birth defects.

We are now faced with chemical exposure in the air we breathe, in the water we drink, in our indoor environments in homes, schools, and offices. We use soaps, lotions, shampoos, toothpaste, and perfumes filled with chemicals. We dye our hair and our bodies. Genetically modified foods with their high levels of pesticides are found in all of our processed foods.

If we do not return to a clean, safe, organic lifestyle, common sense dictates birth defects of all kinds will continue to affect our children in rising numbers.

Recommended Reading:

- *Vaccines, Retroviruses, DNA, and the Discovery That Destroyed Judy Mikovits' Career*
- *Understanding and Detoxifying Genetically Modified Foods*
- *Scientists Against GMOs – Hear From Those Who Have Done the Research*
- *Understand Hypothyroidism – Prevention and Natural Remedies*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*

Sources:

- *Increasing Prevalence of Gastroschisis – 14 States, 1995–2012 – CDC*
- *Facts about Gastroschisis – CDC*
- *Statistics – Avery's Angels Gastroschisis Foundation*