



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 7, 2023

Study: Masks May Cause Stillbirths, Cognitive Problems, and Infertility

Wearing a mask for prolonged periods may cause stillbirths, poor cognitive development in children, and reduced fertility in adolescents, a German study found.

“There is experimental evidence for a possible negative impact risk on the mental and reproductive health of children, adolescents and early life (unborn) due to chronic carbon dioxide re-breathing since the introduction of mask mandates,” the researchers wrote in a [study](#) published in the journal *Heliyon*.

Wearing a mask for a prolonged period, as 4.5 billion people worldwide were required to do during the Covid-19 pandemic, increases the level of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the wearer’s bloodstream because he is rebreathing exhaled air. While N95 masks cause the greatest increase, “all mask types ... can be responsible for a significant and comparable rise in the blood content of CO₂,” penned the scientists.

Fresh air contains approximately 0.04 percent CO₂, but mask usage can increase the concentration to as much as 3.2 percent. “In expert literature,” noted the authors, “concentrations of >2% carbon dioxide in inhaled air are expected to cause adverse health effects.”

One of the known risks of increased CO₂ levels is stillbirths. Previous studies found that “just 0.5% carbon dioxide for a few minutes to an hour per day is capable of inducing stillbirth and ... birth defects in guinea pigs,” reads the report. Aware of this, the U.S. Navy had commissioned its own study of pregnant rats and determined that submarines with female crews must maintain a CO₂ concentration no higher than 0.8 percent.

“Nowadays,” the researchers warned, “all over the world masked pregnant women ... are potentially exposed to carbon dioxide re-breathing levels that are prohibited by [the] U.S. Navy for female submarine officers because of the risk of stillbirth and birth defects.”

Indeed, worldwide stillbirths increased by at least 28 percent during the pandemic; yet Sweden, which imposed only limited Covid-19 mitigation measures and no mask mandates, saw no increase in stillbirths. “Even before the pandemic, in Asia [where mask usage was already commonplace] the stillbirth rates have been significantly higher compared to e.g. Eurasia, Oceania, or North Africa,” wrote the authors.



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High CO₂ concentrations can also retard young animals' mental development even before they are born. Pregnant rats who were exposed to 0.3 percent CO₂ produced babies with "reduced spatial learning and memory" — damage that is "irreversible" and "affects mental health in the long term," said the study. Even lower levels of CO₂ caused young rats to experience increased anxiety.

While performing such experiments on humans is, the researchers observed, "not ethically defensible," early circumstantial evidence suggests that human babies suffer similar mental problems when their mothers inhale excess CO₂ while pregnant. A study of kids in Rhode Island "found that children born during the pandemic have significantly reduced verbal, motor, and overall cognitive performance compared to children born pre-pandemic."

Adolescents who inhale high concentrations of CO₂ are likely to suffer in at least two ways, the scientists reported. First, "a mere 0.3% CO₂ exposure to adolescent brain neurons can cause destruction ... resulting in less activity, increased anxiety and impaired learning and memory." Second, even brief, low-level exposure to elevated CO₂ levels can damage adolescent males' reproductive systems, making them less fertile — data that "has been known for 60 years." Thus, CO₂ exposure limits of 0.5 percent are normally set in work environments, but "when wearing masks — for example in schools — this seems difficult to achieve in many cases."

The authors are not kind to the mask commissars. "Masks for the public may be overrated in a pandemic response," they remarked. "There is [a] discrepancy between the evaluation of virus protection by face mask based in evidence-based criteria (low) and the anticipated efficacy by authorities and mainstream media (high)."

"If wrong decisions are made in the selection of preventive measures in healthy people or if they are improperly applied, the consequences are usually much more severe and liability claims are often unavoidable," they observed. "In view of the possible toxicological mask effects of re-breathed carbon dioxide in pregnant women, children and adolescents, and in view of the limited scientific evidence for masks as an effective pandemic measure, there is need to re-evaluate and reconsider mask mandates especially for these vulnerable subgroups."

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