

Title	Association between preeclampsia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: a population-based and sibling-matched cohort study
Authors	Maher, Gillian M.;Dalman, Christina;O'Keeffe, Gerard W.;Kearney, Patricia M.;McCarthy, Fergus P.;Kenny, Louise C.;Khashan, Ali S.
Publication date	2020-02-13
Original Citation	Maher, G. M., Dalman, C., O'Keeffe, G. W., Kearney, P. M., McCarthy, F. P., Kenny, L. C. and Khashan, A. S. 'Association between Preeclampsia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A Population-Based and Sibling-Matched Cohort Study', Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica, doi: 10.1111/acps.13162
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/acps.13162 - 10.1111/acps.13162
Rights	© 2019 John Wiley & Sons. This is the peer reviewed Accepted Author Manuscript version of the article to be published in final form at https://doi.org/10.1111/acps.13162 . This article may be used for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Wiley Terms and Conditions for Self-Archiving.
Download date	2025-07-02 13:00:22
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/9694



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

1

2 MS GILLIAN MAHER (Orcid ID : 0000-0002-6722-0484)

3

4

5 Article type : Original Article

6

7

8 **Association between Preeclampsia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder:**
9 **A Population-Based and Sibling-Matched Cohort Study**

10

11 **Running Title:** Preeclampsia and ADHD

12

13 Gillian M Maher^{1,2} MPH, Christina Dalman^{3,4} PhD, Gerard W O’Keeffe^{1,5} PhD, Patricia M
14 Kearney² PhD, Fergus P McCarthy¹ PhD, Louise C Kenny⁶ PhD, Ali S Khashan*^{1,2} PhD

15

16 ¹INFANT Research Centre, Cork, Ireland.

17 ²School of Public Health, Western Gateway Building, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.

18 ³Department of Public Health Sciences, Division of Public Health Epidemiology, Karolinska
19 Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

20 ⁴Center for Epidemiology and Community Medicine, Stockholm County Council, Stockholm,
21 Sweden.

22 ⁵Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience, Western Gateway Building, University College Cork,
23 Cork, Ireland.

24 ⁶Department of Women’s and Children’s Health, Institute of Translational Medicine, Faculty of
25 Health and Life Sciences, University of Liverpool.

26

27 ***Corresponding Author:**

28 Dr. Ali S. Khashan

29 Room 4.11, Western Gateway Building, Western Road, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.

This article has been accepted for publication and undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process, which may lead to differences between this version and the [Version of Record](#). Please cite this article as [doi: 10.1111/ACPS.13162](#)

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved

30 Telephone: 00353214205565

31 Email: a.khashan@ucc.ie

32

33 Acknowledgments

34 Henrik Dal, MSc, Division of Public Health Epidemiology, Department of Public Health Sciences,
35 Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden, provided data management support and advice.

36 Funding

37 This work was supported by the Health Research Board (HRB), Ireland under the SPHeRE
38 Programme, [grant number SPHeRE/2013/1].

39 **Conflict of Interest:** The authors confirm that they have no competing interests to declare.

40

41 **Word Count:** 3,069

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

51

52

53

54

55

56

57 Abstract

58 **Objective:** Examine the association between preeclampsia and attention deficit hyperactivity
59 disorder (ADHD), using a large Swedish-based registry cohort.

60 **Methods:** This study comprised 2,047,619 children, with 114,934 (5.6%) cases of ADHD.
61 Preeclampsia was based on two alternate definitions: 1.Preeclampsia (using ICD-9/ICD-10)

2. Preeclampsia and small for gestational age (SGA) combined. ADHD was determined in one of two ways: 1. If a diagnosis of ADHD was present in the National Patient Register or 2. If an individual was in receipt of ADHD medication in the Prescribed Drug Register. Multivariate Cox proportional hazards regression analysis allowed adjustment for several perinatal/sociodemographic factors. Sibling-matched analysis further controlled for shared genetic and familial confounding.

Results: In the adjusted Cox model, preeclampsia was associated with an increase in likelihood of ADHD (HR: 1.15, 95% CI: 1.12, 1.19). The HR for preeclampsia and those born SGA was 1.43 (95% CI: 1.31, 1.55) in the adjusted model, compared to those unexposed to preeclampsia/SGA. The sibling-matched analysis did not materially change these associations (HR: 1.13, 95% CI: 1.05, 1.22) and 1.55 (95% CI: 1.28, 1.88).

Conclusions: Exposure to preeclampsia or preeclampsia/SGA was associated with ADHD, independent of genetic/familial factors shared by siblings. However, it is important to note that sibling-matched analysis can only adjust for factors that are constant between pregnancies, therefore residual confounding cannot be ruled out. Further research is needed to explore modifiable risk factors and identify those most-at-risk babies following delivery.

Keywords: Preeclampsia, Obstetric complications, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Epidemiology.

Significant Outcomes

- This population-based cohort study suggests that preeclampsia, as well as preeclampsia and small for gestational age (SGA) combined (i.e. SGA baby exposed to preeclampsia), are associated with an increase in the likelihood of ADHD, independent of genetic/familial factors shared by siblings.
- Placental pathology may be a common mechanism increasing the likelihood of ADHD as a stronger association was observed for preeclampsia/SGA, rather than preeclampsia alone.
- Further research is needed to explore modifiable risk factors and identify those most-at-risk babies following delivery.

Limitations

- A lack of robust data on gestational hypertension limited the analysis to preeclampsia-ADHD only; therefore, the comparison group may contain women with a diagnosis of gestational hypertension. However, a gestational hypertension-ADHD association would more likely bias our results towards the null.
- Outpatient data only started becoming available in 2001, meaning more severe cases of ADHD may have been overrepresented due to a reliance on inpatient data. However, restricting the study population to 2001-2010 did not have a large impact on findings.
- While sibling-matched analysis may have reduced confounding due to shared genetic and familial factors, the possibility of residual confounding cannot be ruled out in observational studies.

Data availability statement

Authors are not permitted to share data due to GDPR restrictions.

Introduction

Preeclampsia, which affects approximately 5% of all pregnancies¹, is one of the leading causes of maternal morbidity and mortality, and was recently redefined by the International Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy (ISSHP) as gestational hypertension accompanied by at least two of the following: proteinuria and/or other maternal organ dysfunction and/or uteroplacental dysfunction².

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. ADHD has a global pooled prevalence of over 5%, and while this estimate varies significantly worldwide, the variability can mostly be explained by methodological differences between studies^{3, 4}. Despite high heritability estimates, gene environment interactions may also play a role⁵.

Preeclampsia has been linked to adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes, including ADHD^{6, 7}. Pooled results from a recent systematic review suggest that preeclampsia is associated with a 30% increase in odds of ADHD⁶. It is worth noting however, that while an apparent relationship exists in previous literature, residual confounding and quality of the studies may be a concern. For example, only one of ten studies included in the systematic review controlled for a combination of key potential confounders, such as maternal age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and maternal mental illness^{6, 8}.

Aim of the study

125 The aim of this study was to examine the association between preeclampsia and ADHD using a
126 large population-based cohort study, controlling for a wide range of potential confounding factors,
127 as well as shared genetic and familial confounding through sibling-matched analysis.

128

129

130

131 **Materials and Methods**

132 **Study Population**

133 All singleton live births in Sweden from 1990 to 2010, with a follow-up until December 2016,
134 were included in the study. Data were obtained from Swedish National Registers. These included
135 the Medical Birth Register, National Patient Register, Prescribed Drug Register, Multi-generation
136 Register, Total Population Register and Register of Education, linked using personal identification
137 numbers assigned to Swedish residents⁹.

138 Ethical approval was previously obtained from the Stockholm Regional Ethical Review Board
139 (number 2010/1185-31/5), and informed consent was waived by the ethics committee.

140

141 **Exposures**

142 **Preeclampsia**

143 Data on preeclampsia was obtained from the Medical Birth Register which contains data on over
144 97% of all births in Sweden¹⁰. We used two alternate definitions of preeclampsia:

145 1. *Preeclampsia*: Blood pressure $\geq 140/90$ mmHg on or after 20 weeks' gestation combined with
146 proteinuria (≥ 0.3 g/day or ≥ 1 on a urine dipstick on at least two occasions). Preeclampsia was
147 classified using the Swedish version of the ICD, Ninth and Tenth Revision¹¹: ICD-9 until 1996
148 (codes 642E-G) and ICD-10 from 1997 (codes O14-O15)^{12, 13}.

149 2. *Preeclampsia and small for gestational age (SGA) combined*: We combined preeclampsia (as
150 above) and SGA as a proxy for preeclampsia with placental dysfunction². SGA was defined as
151 birthweight < 2 standard deviations below the mean of the sex-specific and gestational age
152 distributions¹⁴.

153

154

155

156 **Outcome**

157 Data on ADHD were obtained from the National Patient Register and the Prescribed Drug
158 Register. The National Patient Register was launched in 1964, contains inpatient psychiatric
159 diagnoses from 1973, and outpatient data since 2001 (with increasingly better coverage until
160 2006)¹⁵⁻¹⁷. The Prescribed Drug Register was expanded on 1st July 2005 to include personal
161 identification numbers allowing linkage to other registers^{17, 18}.

162 A diagnosis of ADHD was determined in one of two ways:

163 1. If a diagnosis of ADHD was present in the National Patient Register, using ICD-10 (code F90
164 and F98.8), available since 1997¹⁷.

165 2. If the subject was in receipt of ADHD medication in the Prescribed Drug Register. ADHD
166 medication data was classified according to Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical classification
167 system, and included amphetamine (N06BA01), dexamphetamine (N06BA02), psychostimulants
168 methyphenidate (N06BA04) and noradrenergic reuptake inhibitor atomoxetine (N06BA09).

170 **Confounding Factors**

171 Potential confounders were based on previous literature. Year of birth, infant sex, maternal age,
172 parental country of birth, parity, maternal smoking status, body mass index (BMI) at first antenatal
173 visit and gestational weight gain were obtained from the Medical Birth Register. Parental
174 depression, bipolar disorder, and non-affective psychiatric disorders were obtained from the
175 National Patient Register. Family income and parental level of education data were obtained from
176 the Total Population Register and Register of Education. Information on all cofounders was
177 available for the entire study period. Where a variable had missing data, the data were added as a
178 separate category and included in the various Cox regression analyses by means of an indicator
179 variable to ensure that all cases were included in the analyses¹⁹. (See eMethods for description of
180 confounders).

182 **Statistical Analysis**

183 All data were analysed using Stata/MP 14.2. We conducted Cox proportional hazards regression
184 analysis to calculate a hazard ratio (HR) and 95% confidence interval for a preeclampsia-ADHD
185 relationship, preeclampsia/SGA-ADHD (i.e SGA baby exposed to preeclampsia) relationship and
186 the relationship between preeclampsia without SGA and ADHD.

187 Similar to a previous ADHD study conducted on this population (and because a diagnosis of
188 ADHD is less likely to occur before this time)¹⁷, follow-up began from a child's third birthday, (or

189 1st January 1997 for children who turned three years of age before 1997). Children continued to
190 be followed up until he/she received a diagnosis of ADHD, prescription for ADHD, death,
191 emigration, or the study period had ended (31st December 2016).

192 Partially adjusted models were stratified for year of birth in order to satisfy the proportional hazard
193 assumption (model 1). Fully adjusted models (model 2) controlled for year of birth, infant sex,
194 maternal age, parental country of birth, parity, parental depression, bipolar disorder, and non-
195 affective psychiatric disorder, family income, maternal smoking status, BMI at first antenatal visit,
196 gestational weight gain and parental level of education.

197 *Sibling-matched analysis:* We conducted a sibling-matched analysis (model 3) to control for
198 shared genetic and familial confounding, using stratified Cox regression. This analysis was
199 matched on maternal ID and consisted of a separate stratum for each family in order to estimate
200 the probability of ADHD within family²⁰. We adjusted for the same potential confounders as
201 model 2 with the exception of maternal country of birth as this is the same across sibling pairs.
202 Finally, we repeated these analyses, firstly, including only those with both an ICD code for ADHD
203 and if the subject was in receipt of ADHD medication, and secondly, including only those with an
204 ICD code for ADHD.

205 *Post-hoc analysis:* We examined the association between SGA only and ADHD compared to non-
206 exposure to SGA/non-exposure to preeclampsia.

207 *E-value:* We calculated the E-value for the statistically significant primary effect estimates and
208 lower limits of their 95% confidence interval (CI) to examine the extent of unmeasured
209 confounding, using the publicly available online E-value calculator:
210 (<https://eval.evalue.hmdc.harvard.edu/app/>)^{21, 22}. In summary, an E-value is a continuous measure that
211 quantifies the minimum strength of association an unmeasured confounder would need to have
212 with both preeclampsia and ADHD in order to explain away an effect estimate²².

213 *Sensitivity analyses:* We conducted several sensitivity analyses, decided *a priori*. For example,
214 while classifying preeclampsia into mild/severe is not recommended in clinical practice because it
215 is a complex disorder that can deteriorate rapidly, gestational age is sometimes used as a proxy for
216 preeclampsia with severe features. As a result, preeclampsia could be considered severe if delivery
217 occurred before 34 weeks' gestation²³. Therefore, we examined the association between
218 preeclampsia and ADHD by gestational age. In addition, it is possible that a mother's lifestyle
219 factors could change between pregnancies. As a result, we excluded women who had preeclampsia
220 in her first pregnancy, and examined a preeclampsia-ADHD relationship in women who had a

221 diagnosis of preeclampsia in subsequent pregnancies only. Additional sensitivity analyses
222 included restricting the study population to 2001-2010 (when outpatient data on ADHD started to
223 become available), and restricting the study population to 1994-2010 to ensure every child begins
224 follow-up at their third birthday. Furthermore, we included 'preeclampsia excluding chronic
225 hypertension' as the exposure, and 'preeclampsia with chronic hypertension' as the exposure. We
226 examined preeclampsia-ADHD excluding those with a family history of mental illness. We
227 analysed the relationship between preeclampsia with low/intermediate APGAR score at five
228 minutes, while we also examined a preeclampsia-ADHD relationship by maternal age, in addition
229 to preeclampsia-ADHD by BMI group at time of first antenatal visit. Finally, we investigated a
230 preeclampsia-ADHD association by gender.

253 **Results**

254 **Descriptive Statistics**

255 A total of 2,142,694 live births were recorded in the Swedish Medical Birth Register between
256 1990 and 2010. After excluding 61,172 multiple births, 30,636 children who were censored before
257 their third birthday, and 3267 children who turned three years of age before 1997 but were
258 censored before follow-up began on 1st January 1997, a total of 2,047,619 children remained in
259 the final cohort (Table 1).

260 There were 57,493 (2.8%) children exposed to preeclampsia and 7191 (0.4%) exposed to
261 preeclampsia and SGA combined. There were 114,934 (5.6%) cases of ADHD. Of these 101,075
262 (87.9%) cases were prescribed ADHD medication at some point, and 94,708 (82.4%) cases had an
263 ICD diagnosis. A total of 80,849 (70.3%) cases were recorded with both an ICD code and
264 medication, while there were 13,859 (12.1%) cases with an ICD code only, and 20,226 (17.6%)
265 cases with medication only.

266

267 **Association between preeclampsia, preeclampsia/SGA and ADHD**

268 In the fully adjusted model (model 2), the results suggested an association between preeclampsia
269 and ADHD (HR: 1.15, 95% CI: 1.12, 1.19) compared to those unexposed to preeclampsia. Result
270 of the sibling-matched analysis (model 3) did not significantly change (HR: 1.13, 95% CI: 1.05,
271 1.22). The HR for those born SGA and exposed to preeclampsia was 1.43 (95% CI: 1.31, 1.55) in
272 the adjusted model (model 2), and 1.55 (95% CI: 1.28, 1.88) in the sibling-match model (model 3),
273 while the HR for those exposed to preeclampsia but not born SGA was 1.12 (95% CI: 1.08, 1.16)
274 in model 2, and 1.09 (95% CI: 1.01, 1.18) in model 3. Limiting the data to those with both an ICD
275 code and medication data did not materially change results, while including only those with an
276 ICD code for ADHD produced similar results (Table 2).

277 **Post-Hoc Analysis**

278 The adjusted HR for SGA only (i.e. SGA without preeclampsia) and ADHD was 1.32 (95% CI:
279 1.27, 1.37), while the HR in the sibling-matched analysis was 1.29 (95% CI: 1.19, 1.39) compared
280 to non-exposure to SGA/non-exposure to preeclampsia (Table 2).

281

282 **E-Values**

283 The E-values for significant primary effect estimates were 1.51 for preeclampsia, 2.47 for
284 preeclampsia with SGA and 1.40 for preeclampsia without SGA, while the E-values for

corresponding lower limits of their 95% CI were 1.28, 1.88 and 1.11 respectively. (see eTable 1 in Supplement for worked example on preeclampsia-ADHD).

Sensitivity Analyses

Preeclampsia and ADHD by gestational age

When we restricted analysis to children born ≥ 39 weeks' gestational age, the HR for a preeclampsia-ADHD relationship was 1.07 (95% CI: 1.02, 1.12). Among children born at 37-38 weeks', the HR in those exposed to preeclampsia was 1.20 (95% CI: 1.13, 1.28), while the HR among those not exposed to preeclampsia was 1.09 (95% CI: 1.08, 1.11), when compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia in those born ≥ 39 weeks' gestational age. Exposure to preeclampsia (among children born 34-36 weeks') was associated with a 24% increase in likelihood of ADHD (HR: 1.24, 95% CI: 1.14, 1.35), while those unexposed to preeclampsia had a 14% increased likelihood of ADHD among those born at a similar gestational age (HR: 1.14, 95% CI: 1.11, 1.18). Finally, the HR among those exposed to preeclampsia (born < 34 weeks' gestational age) was 1.74 (95% CI: 1.60, 1.91), while the HR among those not exposed to preeclampsia (born < 34 weeks' gestational age) was 1.49 (95% CI: 1.42, 1.96) when compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia among those born ≥ 39 weeks' gestational age (Table 3).

Additional sensitivity analyses

Results of additional sensitivity analyses are outlined in eResults and eTable 2 in the Supplement and were not materially different from the primary analysis. In sum, when we excluded women who had preeclampsia in their first pregnancy, the adjusted HR was 1.21. When we restricted the study population to 2001-2010 and 1994-2010, the HR was 1.21 and 1.14 respectively. The fully adjusted HR for preeclampsia (excluding chronic hypertension) and preeclampsia (with chronic hypertension) were 1.15 and 1.18 respectively. The HR for preeclampsia (excluding those with a family history of mental illness was 1.16. Preeclampsia (with low/intermediate APGAR at 5 minutes) increased the likelihood of ADHD by 13% when compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia in those with a low/intermediate APGAR score. Results of the subgroup analysis suggested that preeclampsia was significantly associated with ADHD at each category of maternal age and at each category of BMI at first antenatal visit. The HR for preeclampsia-ADHD in males was 1.18 compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia in males, while the HR for preeclampsia-ADHD in females was 1.10 compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia in females. Finally,

exposure to preeclampsia in males was associated with a 9% increase in likelihood of ADHD when compared to exposure to preeclampsia in females.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the association between preeclampsia and preeclampsia/SGA and ADHD, using a large population-based cohort study. We have yielded three principal findings. First, after controlling for known potential confounding factors, preeclampsia was associated with a 15% increase in likelihood of ADHD when compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia. This finding was similar in the sibling-matched analysis suggesting that this apparent preeclampsia-ADHD relationship was not due to shared genetics or familial environment. This result is in line with the pooled estimate from a systematic review, which suggested that preeclampsia was associated with a 30% increase in odds of ADHD, with individual study estimates ranging from 1.19 to 1.50⁶.

Second, as SGA is associated with uteroplacental dysfunction²⁴, and due to recent guidelines put forward by ISSHP to include uteroplacental dysfunction in the definition of preeclampsia, we combined preeclampsia and SGA into a single exposure as a crude proxy for preeclampsia with placental dysfunction. Being an SGA baby and exposed to preeclampsia was associated with a 43% increase in likelihood of ADHD in the fully adjusted model, and a 55% increase in likelihood of ADHD in the sibling-matched analysis, when compared to non-exposure to preeclampsia or SGA. This may suggest that placental pathology may be a common factor increasing the likelihood of ADHD given the stronger association with preeclampsia/SGA than preeclampsia alone.

Third, while preeclampsia was associated with ADHD, independent of gestational age, the likelihood of ADHD increases with decreasing gestational age. For example, preeclampsia was associated with a 7% increase in likelihood of ADHD when we restricted the analysis to those born ≥ 39 weeks' gestation. However, the HR increases to 1.74 among those exposed to preeclampsia and born at < 34 weeks' gestation.

349

350 This apparent preeclampsia-ADHD association may lack specificity however, as preeclampsia is
351 associated with several neurodevelopmental outcomes such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD),
352 cognitive impairment and intellectual disability (ID) in previous literature⁶. Therefore,
353 preeclampsia could in fact be a risk factor for poor neurodevelopmental outcome in general, with
354 the specificity of outcome (e.g. ADHD, ASD, ID etc.) being determined by underlying genetic risk
355 factors²⁵.

356

357 **Potential Mechanisms**

358 The molecular basis of a preeclampsia-ADHD relationship remains unknown, and there are few
359 studies that address the potential biological mechanisms of ADHD specifically. Animal models
360 have shown that activation of interleukin-17a (IL-17a) in the fetal brain, in response to maternal
361 immune activation, is associated with behavioural disturbances and an abnormal cortical
362 phenotype in affected offspring^{26, 27}. Therefore, we can speculate that maternal inflammation may
363 be one such mechanism given the role of preeclampsia in chronic immune activation and elevated
364 levels of inflammatory cytokines such as IL-17a^{26, 28, 29}. In a separate study, maternal depressive
365 symptoms throughout pregnancy were shown to be associated with ADHD in offspring³⁰. As
366 prenatal depression is linked to an increase in levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines³¹, it is possible
367 that the inflammatory response observed in preeclampsia may have a similar inflammatory
368 mediated effect on ADHD-risk.

369 However, it may also be possible that lifestyle factors not available in the registers, such as
370 maternal alcohol consumption may also play a role. Alcohol consumption during pregnancy has
371 been shown to affect placentation, fetal growth, and likelihood of ADHD^{32, 33}. As preeclampsia is,
372 at least in part, a disease of placentation, leaving the fetus vulnerable to the effects of placental
373 pathology, particularly fetal growth restriction², it is plausible that maternal alcohol consumption
374 during pregnancy may contribute the observed preeclampsia-ADHD association.

375

376 **Strengths and Limitations**

377 There are several strengths in this study. To our knowledge, it is the largest epidemiological study
378 to examine the association between preeclampsia-ADHD to date. Use of National Registers
379 minimised recall bias, while also allowed us to control for a wide range of confounding factors. In
380 addition, the sibling-matched analysis allowed us to adjust for unmeasured confounding factors

381 shared by siblings such as family environment, diet, lifestyle factors, maternal characteristics, and
382 genetic factors¹⁴. Furthermore, use of the E-value allowed us to quantify Bradford-Hill's
383 consideration of 'strength of association' in an attempt to investigate the robustness of our effect
384 estimates to unmeasured confounding²².

385 However, this study also contains several limitations. First, sibling-matched analysis may have
386 reduced confounding due to shared genetic and familial factors. However, this method can only
387 adjust for factors that are constant between pregnancies³⁴ and the possibility of residual
388 confounding cannot be ruled out in observational studies. Taking preeclampsia-ADHD as an
389 example: (E-value for effect estimate = 1.51), an unmeasured confounder associated with both
390 preeclampsia and ADHD by a risk-ratio of 1.51 may potentially explain away our preeclampsia-
391 ADHD effect estimate of 1.13. However, the effect-estimate for preeclampsia/SGA combined is
392 less likely to be explained away by unmeasured confounding with an E-value of 2.47.
393 Nonetheless, we cannot dismiss the potential effect of factors such as maternal alcohol
394 consumption could have on findings. Second, a lack of robust data on gestational hypertension
395 limited our analysis to preeclampsia-ADHD only. Therefore, our comparison groups may contain
396 women with a diagnosis of gestational hypertension, and while previous literature suggests a
397 positive gestational hypertension-ADHD association³⁵, this would likely bias our results towards
398 to the null. Third, as outpatient data only started becoming available in 2001, more severe cases of
399 ADHD may have been overrepresented in our data. However, when we restricted the study
400 population to 2001-2010, results were not materially different from our main findings suggesting
401 that the inclusion of less severe cases after 2001 may not have had a large impact on findings.

402 In conclusion, this population-based cohort suggests that preeclampsia as well as
403 preeclampsia/SGA was associated with ADHD. Placental pathology may be a common
404 mechanism increasing the likelihood of ADHD given the stronger association with
405 preeclampsia/SGA, rather than preeclampsia alone. Further research is needed in order to clarify
406 this association, explore modifiable risk factors and identify those most-at-risk babies following
407 delivery.

408

409

410

411

412

413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443

References

1. Rana S, Lemoine E, Granger J, Karumanchi SA. Preeclampsia. *Circulation Research* 2019; **124**: 1094-112.
2. Brown MA, Magee LA, Kenny LC, et al. The hypertensive disorders of pregnancy: ISSHP classification, diagnosis & management recommendations for international practice. *Pregnancy Hypertens* 2018; **13**: 291-310.
3. Polanczyk G, de Lima MS, Horta BL, Biederman J, Rohde LA. The worldwide prevalence of ADHD: a systematic review and metaregression analysis. *Am J Psychiatry* 2007; **164**: 942-8.
4. Polanczyk GV, Willcutt EG, Salum GA, Kieling C, Rohde LA. ADHD prevalence estimates across three decades: an updated systematic review and meta-regression analysis. *Int J Epidemiol* 2014; **43**: 434-42.
5. Faraone SV, Larsson H. Genetics of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. *Mol Psychiatry* 2019; **24**: 562-75.
6. Maher GM, O'Keeffe GW, Kearney PM, et al. Association of Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy With Risk of Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Offspring: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Psychiatry* 2018; **75**: 809-19.
7. Dachew BA, Scott JG, Mamun A, Alati R. Pre-eclampsia and the risk of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in offspring: Findings from the ALSPAC birth cohort study. *Psychiatry Res* 2018; **272**: 392-7.
8. Getahun D, Rhoads GG, Demissie K, et al. In utero exposure to ischemic-hypoxic conditions and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Pediatrics* 2013; **131**: e53-61.

- 444 9. Ludvigsson JF, Otterblad-Olausson P, Pettersson BU, Ekblom A. The Swedish personal identity
445 number: possibilities and pitfalls in healthcare and medical research. *Eur J Epidemiol* 2009; **24**: 659-67.
- 446 10. National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen). *In English – the Swedish Medical Birth*
447 *Register*. 2019 [cited 2019 30th August]; Available from: [https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-](https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/register/alla-register/medicinska-fodelseregistret/)
448 [data/register/alla-register/medicinska-fodelseregistret/](https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/register/alla-register/medicinska-fodelseregistret/)
- 449 11. Zetterstrom K, Lindeberg SN, Haglund B, Hanson U. The association of maternal chronic
450 hypertension with perinatal death in male and female offspring: a record linkage study of 866,188
451 women. *BJOG* 2008; **115**: 1436-42.
- 452 12. Cnattingius S, Wikstrom AK, Stephansson O, Johansson K. The Impact of Small for Gestational Age
453 Births in Early and Late Preeclamptic Pregnancies for Preeclampsia Recurrence: a Cohort Study of
454 Successive Pregnancies in Sweden. *Paediatr Perinat Epidemiol* 2016; **30**: 563-70.
- 455 13. Ros HS. *Preeclampsia and other circulatory diseases during pregnancy – etiological aspects and*
456 *impact on female offspring*. [PhD dissertation]. Stockholm, Sweden: Karolinska Institutet; 2001.
- 457 14. Khashan AS, Kenny LC, Lundholm C, et al. Gestational Age and Birth Weight and the Risk of
458 Childhood Type 1 Diabetes: A Population-Based Cohort and Sibling Design Study. *Diabetes Care* 2015; **38**:
459 2308-15.
- 460 15. Ludvigsson JF, Andersson E, Ekblom A, et al. External review and validation of the Swedish national
461 inpatient register. *BMC public health* 2011; **11**: 450.
- 462 16. Rai D, Heuvelman H, Dalman C, et al. Association Between Autism Spectrum Disorders With or
463 Without Intellectual Disability and Depression in Young Adulthood. *JAMA network open* 2018; **1**: e181465-
464 e.
- 465 17. Curran EA, Khashan AS, Dalman C, et al. Obstetric mode of delivery and attention-
466 deficit/hyperactivity disorder: a sibling-matched study. *Int J Epidemiol* 2016; **45**: 532-42.
- 467 18. Wallerstedt SM, Wettermark B, Hoffmann M. The First Decade with the Swedish Prescribed Drug
468 Register - A Systematic Review of the Output in the Scientific Literature. *Basic Clin Pharmacol Toxicol*
469 2016; **119**: 464-9.
- 470 19. Groenwold RHH, White IR, Donders ART, Carpenter JR, Altman DG, Moons KGM. Missing covariate
471 data in clinical research: when and when not to use the missing-indicator method for analysis. *CMAJ* :
472 *Canadian Medical Association journal = journal de l'Association medicale canadienne* 2012; **184**: 1265-9.
- 473 20. Obel C, Olsen J, Henriksen TB, et al. Is maternal smoking during pregnancy a risk factor for
474 hyperkinetic disorder?--Findings from a sibling design. *Int J Epidemiol* 2011; **40**: 338-45.
- 475 21. Mathur MB, Ding P, Riddell CA, VanderWeele TJ. Web Site and R Package for Computing E-values.
476 *Epidemiology* 2018; **29**: e45-e7.

- 477 22. VanderWeele TJ, Ding P. Sensitivity Analysis in Observational Research: Introducing the E-Value.
478 *Annals of internal medicine* 2017; **167**: 268-74.
- 479 23. Hernández-Díaz S, Toh S, Cnattingius S. Risk of pre-eclampsia in first and subsequent pregnancies:
480 prospective cohort study. *The BMJ* 2009; **338**: b2255.
- 481 24. Dalman C, Allebeck P, Cullberg J, Grunewald C, Koster M. Obstetric complications and the risk of
482 schizophrenia: a longitudinal study of a national birth cohort. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 1999; **56**: 234-40.
- 483 25. Bodnar TS, Rainecki C, Wertenlecker W, et al. Altered maternal immune networks are associated with
484 adverse child neurodevelopment: Impact of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. *Brain Behav Immun*
485 2018.
- 486 26. Bohm S, Curran EA, Kenny LC, O'Keeffe GW, Murray D, Khashan AS. The Effect of Hypertensive
487 Disorders of Pregnancy on the Risk of ADHD in the Offspring. *J Atten Disord* 2017: 1087054717690230.
- 488 27. Choi GB, Yim YS, Wong H, et al. The maternal interleukin-17a pathway in mice promotes autism-
489 like phenotypes in offspring. *Science (New York, NY)* 2016; **351**: 933-9.
- 490 28. Maher GM, McCarthy FP, McCarthy CM, et al. A perspective on pre-eclampsia and
491 neurodevelopmental outcomes in the offspring: does maternal inflammation play a role? *Int J Dev*
492 *Neurosci* 2018 doi:10.1016/j.ijdevneu.2018.10.004.
- 493 29. Redman CW, Sacks GP, Sargent IL. Preeclampsia: an excessive maternal inflammatory response to
494 pregnancy. *Am J Obstet Gynecol* 1999; **180**: 499-506.
- 495 30. Wolford E, Lahti M, Tuovinen S, et al. Maternal depressive symptoms during and after pregnancy
496 are associated with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder symptoms in their 3- to 6-year-old children.
497 *PLoS One* 2017; **12**: e0190248.
- 498 31. Shelton MM, Schminkey DL, Groer MW. Relationships among prenatal depression, plasma
499 cortisol, and inflammatory cytokines. *Biological research for nursing* 2015; **17**: 295-302.
- 500 32. Gronimus R, Ridout D, Sandberg S, Santosh P. Maternal alcohol consumption. *London J Prim Care*
501 *(Abingdon)* 2009; **2**: 28-35.
- 502 33. Wang N, Tikellis G, Sun C, et al. The effect of maternal prenatal smoking and alcohol consumption
503 on the placenta-to-birth weight ratio. *Placenta* 2014; **35**: 437-41.
- 504 34. Khashan AS, Kenny LC, Lundholm C, Kearney PM, Gong T, Almquist C. Mode of Obstetrical Delivery
505 and Type 1 Diabetes: A Sibling Design Study. *Pediatrics* 2014; **134**: e806-e13.
- 506 35. Pohlabeln H, Rach S, De Henauw S, et al. Further evidence for the role of pregnancy-induced
507 hypertension and other early life influences in the development of ADHD: results from the IDEFICS study.
508 *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 2017; **26**: 957-67.

509 36. Cedergren MI. Optimal gestational weight gain for body mass index categories. *Obstet Gynecol*
510 2007; **110**: 759-64.

511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522

Table 1: Perinatal and Sociodemographic Characteristics Related to Preeclampsia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Among Singleton Live Births in Sweden between 1990 and 2010

	No. (%) of Infants	
Characteristic	Total Population	Preeclampsia
Total Population	2047619	57493 (2.8)
ADHD	114934 (5.6)	3941 (6.9)
SGA	46719 (2.3)	7191 (12.6)
First-born child	879954 (42.9)	37642 (65.5)
Sex (male)	1052095 (51.4)	29938 (52.1)
Maternal age, years		
<20	41285 (2.0)	1535 (2.7)
20-29	1015666 (49.6)	29354 (51.1)
30-39	935055 (45.7)	24569 (42.7)
≥40	55613 (2.7)	2035 (3.5)
Gestational age, weeks		
<34	23538 (1.1)	5048 (8.8)
34	12181 (0.6)	1702 (3.0)
35	20845 (1.0)	2337 (4.1)
36	41472 (2.0)	3868 (6.7)

37	98759 (4.8)	6385 (11.2)
38	277445 (13.6)	9153 (15.9)
39	472125 (23.1)	10632 (18.5)
40	580209 (28.4)	10128 (17.6)
>40	519037 (25.4)	8162 (14.2)
5-Minute Apgar score		
0-3 (low)	3419 (0.2)	228 (0.4)
4-6 (intermediate)	15330 (0.8)	1251 (2.2)
7-10 (high)	2013115 (99.0)	55464 (97.4)
Mother's country of birth		
Sweden	1597528 (78.0)	47286 (82.2)
Other Nordic country	44704 (2.2)	1301 (2.3)
Other country	278978 (13.6)	5709 (9.9)
Missing	126409 (6.2)	3197 (5.6)
Father's country of birth		
Sweden	1577672 (77.1)	46891 (81.6)
Other Nordic country	42429 (2.1)	1184 (2.0)
Other country	287522 (14.0)	5820 (10.1)
Missing	139996 (6.8)	3598 (6.3)
Maternal depression		
Never	1763485 (86.1)	49730 (86.5)
Previously diagnosed	157876 (7.7)	4574 (7.9)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Maternal bipolar disorder		
Never	1904427 (93.0)	53772 (93.5)
Previously diagnosed	16934 (0.8)	532 (0.9)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Maternal nonaffective disorder		
Never	1909156 (93.2)	53923 (93.8)
Previously diagnosed	12205 (0.6)	381 (0.6)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Paternal depression		
Never	1831285 (89.4)	51886 (90.2)
Previously diagnosed	90076 (4.4)	2418 (4.2)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Paternal bipolar disorder		
Never	1911454 (93.3)	54058 (94.0)

Previously diagnosed	9907 (0.5)	246 (0.4)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Paternal nonaffective disorder		
Never	1909156 (93.2)	53980 (93.9)
Previously diagnosed	12205 (0.6)	324 (0.5)
Missing	126258 (6.2)	3189 (5.6)
Income quintile		
First	362540 (17.7)	8168 (14.2)
Second	383691 (18.7)	9542 (16.6)
Third	388138 (19.0)	11044 (19.2)
Fourth	390219 (19.1)	12509 (21.8)
Fifth	384890 (18.8)	12772 (22.2)
Missing	138141 (6.7)	3458 (6.0)
Smoking at first antenatal visit		
No	1683882 (86.4)	49417 (90.7)
1-9 cigarettes/day	178176 (9.1)	3576 (6.5)
≥10 cigarettes/day	87699 (4.5)	1515 (2.8)
BMI at first antenatal visit		
<20	172519 (8.4)	3048 (5.3)
20-24.9	868599 (42.4)	19449 (33.8)
25-29.9	372026 (18.2)	13037 (22.7)
≥30	154136 (7.5)	9415 (16.4)
Missing	480339 (23.5)	12544 (21.8)
Optimal gestational weight gain by BMI group at first antenatal visit³⁶		
<20		
Optimum	15910 (0.8)	211 (0.4)
Inadequate/Excessive	49130 (2.4)	891 (1.6)
20-24.9		
Optimum	75448 (3.7)	1003 (1.7)
Inadequate/Excessive	254217 (12.4)	5855 (10.2)
25-29.9		
Optimum	25752 (1.3)	527 (0.9)
Excessive	115893 (5.7)	4260 (7.4)
≥30		
Optimum	12147 (0.6)	461 (0.8)
Excessive	48240 (2.3)	3180 (5.5)

Missing	1450882 (70.8)	41105 (71.5)
Highest parental level of education at child's birthyear		
Pre-high school	131210 (6.4)	3304 (5.7)
High school	886656 (43.3)	26603 (46.3)
Post high school	877980 (42.9)	23844 (41.5)
Missing	151773 (7.4)	3742 (6.5)
<p>Categories were collapsed if cell count <10, for example, inadequate/excessive weight gain in women categorised as BMI<20 were combined for the purpose of displaying data only.</p> <p>If missing data >5%, number (%) of missing data reported.</p> <p>Abbreviations: SGA, small for gestational age; BMI, body mass index.</p>		

Table 2: Association between Preeclampsia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Among Singleton Live Births in Sweden between 1990 and 2010

	Total population			Sibling pairs
	Exposed cases	Model 1 HR (95% CI) [†]	Model 2 HR (95% CI) [‡]	Model 3 HR (95% CI) [§]
All ADHD (n=114934)				
Preeclampsia	3941	1.22 (1.18, 1.26)	1.15 (1.12, 1.19)	1.13 (1.05, 1.22)
Preeclampsia and SGA [¶]	582	1.49 (1.37, 1.61)	1.43 (1.31, 1.55)	1.55 (1.28, 1.88)
Preeclampsia without SGA	3322	1.19 (1.15, 1.23)	1.12 (1.08, 1.16)	1.09 (1.01, 1.18)
SGA without Preeclampsia	3205	1.51 (1.45, 1.56)	1.32 (1.27, 1.37)	1.29 (1.19, 1.39)
ADHD (ICD code and in receipt of medication) (n=80849)				
Preeclampsia	2795	1.23 (1.18, 1.27)	1.16 (1.11, 1.20)	1.11 (1.02, 1.21)
Preeclampsia and SGA [¶]	399	1.44 (1.31, 1.59)	1.37 (1.25, 1.52)	1.54 (1.23, 1.92)
Preeclampsia without SGA	2370	1.21 (1.16, 1.26)	1.13 (1.08, 1.18)	1.07 (0.98, 1.17)
ADHD (ICD code only) (n=94708)				
Preeclampsia	3267	1.23 (1.18, 1.27)	1.16 (1.12, 1.20)	1.11 (1.03, 1.20)
Preeclampsia and SGA [¶]	480	1.48 (1.35, 1.62)	1.41 (1.29, 1.55)	1.48 (1.21, 1.82)
Preeclampsia without SGA	2757	1.20 (1.16, 1.25)	1.13 (1.09, 1.18)	1.07 (0.99, 1.17)
Abbreviations: HR, hazard ratio; 95% CI, 95% confidence interval; SGA, small for gestational age; ICD, International Classification of Disease;				
[†] Adjusted for year of birth.				
[‡] Adjusted for year of birth, infant sex, maternal age, parental country of birth, parity, parental depression, bipolar disorder, and non-affective psychiatric disorders, family income, maternal smoking status, BMI at first antenatal visit, gestational weight gain and parental level of education.				
[§] Adjusted for same potential confounders as above with the exception of maternal country of birth.				
[¶] Reference=no preeclampsia/no SGA.				
Missing data on SGA for 37 cases of ADHD (full cohort). Missing data on SGA for 26 cases of ADHD (with both ICD code and medication data). Missing data on SGA for 30 cases of ADHD (with ICD code).				

Table 3: Association between Preeclampsia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Among Singleton Live Births in Sweden between 1990 and 2010 by Gestational Age

	Total population		
All ADHD (n=114934)	Exposed cases	Model 1 HR (95% CI) [†]	Model 2 HR (95% CI) [‡]
No Preeclampsia, ≥39 weeks' gestational age (ref)	82844	1.00	1.00
Preeclampsia, ≥39 weeks' gestational age	1808	1.14 (1.09, 1.20)	1.07 (1.02, 1.12)
No Preeclampsia, 37-38 weeks' gestational age	21742	1.13 (1.12, 1.15)	1.09 (1.08, 1.11)
Preeclampsia, 37-38 weeks' gestational age	1066	1.28 (1.20, 1.36)	1.20 (1.13, 1.28)
No Preeclampsia, 34-36 weeks' gestational age	4545	1.28 (1.24, 1.32)	1.14 (1.11, 1.18)
Preeclampsia, 34-36 weeks' gestational age	568	1.32 (1.22, 1.44)	1.24 (1.14, 1.35)
No Preeclampsia, <34 weeks' gestational age	1703	1.78 (1.70, 1.87)	1.49 (1.42, 1.56)
Preeclampsia, <34 weeks' gestational age	491	1.85 (1.69, 2.02)	1.74 (1.60, 1.91)
Abbreviations: HR, hazard ratio; 95% CI, 95% confidence interval; ref, reference; SGA, small for gestational age			
[†] Adjusted for year of birth.			
[‡] Adjusted for year of birth, infant sex, maternal age, parental country of birth, parity, parental depression, bipolar disorder, and non-affective psychiatric disorders, family income, maternal smoking status, BMI at first antenatal visit, gestational weight gain and parental level of education.			
Missing data on gestational age for 167 cases of ADHD.			