

Coffee, Glyphosate Levels, and Shorter Pregnancies

Glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, is the most commonly used herbicide in the world. Nearly 300 million pounds of Roundup is sprayed on U.S. farms every year. A small Indiana study found that more than 90 percent of pregnant women had glyphosate in their urine. They also found that higher concentrations of glyphosate correlate to earlier deliveries.

Researchers recruited 71 pregnant women in central Indiana. The women provided two urine samples and two drinking water samples from their homes and answered questions about what food and beverages they consume and the kind of stress they deal with, as well as where they lived. Researchers tested the water and urine samples for glyphosate. Then researchers divided women into four groups based on how much glyphosate was in their urine. Researchers later used medical records after birth to determine their pregnancy length.

The study found that 93 percent of the women had detectable glyphosate in their urine and those who lived in rural areas more glyphosate in their urine than the suburban residents did.

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The study also found that women who drank more than 24 ounces of caffeinated beverages daily had shown greater levels of glyphosate. The good news is that none of the drinking water samples had detectable glyphosate levels in them, but this looks like bad news for coffee addicts.

Only two of the women in the study gave birth prematurely, but researchers found that women with more glyphosate in their

urine delivered earlier than women with less, on average. Glyphosate was not found to lead to correlate with low birth weight or head circumference.

It was mind-boggling that glyphosate was so prevalent in urine samples . . . but it was a pleasant surprise that none of the drinking water came out positive,” – Lead author Shahid Parvez

The link between caffeine intake and high glyphosate levels in urine surprised the researchers.

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It makes sense to us since there are many different food products imported from Southeast Asia and South America but we don't know what they contain. It indicates a need to think about these food products, such as coffee beans and other drinks that we import.” – Parvez

Most of the women were white. The sample was small. The study is limited by its small size and lack of geographic and racial diversity.

More research needs to be done, but the precautions are common sense. Be vigilant and careful, especially those living in areas where corn and soybeans are grown.”

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Sources:

- *Glyphosate exposure in pregnancy and shortened gestational length: a prospective Indiana birth cohort study* – Environmental Health Journal
- *Heavily used herbicide tied to shorter pregnancies* – Reuters *Heavily used herbicide tied to shorter*

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