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Document Summary

Title: The endocrinology of pregnancy and fetal loss in wild baboons

Keywords: Fetal loss; Miscarriage; Fecal steroids; Estrogens; Progestins; Glucocorticoids; Baboon; Papio; Pregnancy

Abstract: An impressive body of research has focused on the mechanisms by which the steroid estrogens (E), progestins (P), and glucocorticoids (GC) ensure successful pregnancy. With the advance of non-invasive techniques to measure steroids in urine and feces, steroid hormones are routinely monitored to detect pregnancy in wild mammalian species, but hormone data on fetal loss have been sparse. Here, we examine fecal steroid hormones from five groups of wild yellow baboons (*Papio cynocephalus*) in the Amboseli basin of Kenya to compare the hormones of successful pregnancies to those ending in fetal loss or stillbirth. Using a combination of longitudinal and cross-sectional data, we analyzed three steroid hormones (E, P, GC) and related metabolites from 5 years of fecal samples across 188 pregnancies. Our results document the course of steroid hormone concentrations across successful baboon pregnancy in the wild and demonstrate that fecal estrogens predicted impending fetal loss starting...

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