Parental anxiety, depression may lead to fussy eating in kids

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Children whose parents suffer from anxiety and or [depression](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/Depression)during pregnancy or early in the child's life are most likely to become fussy eaters, finds new research.   
  
The results showed that by the age of three, around 30 percent of the children were classified as fussy eaters.   
  
For mothers, the anxiety was evident both during pregnancy and during preschool days of the child, whereas for fathers the depression was felt only during the pre-school period.

Further, clinically high maternal anxiety scores were more associated with fussy eating .   
  
As for depression, the mothers' prenatal symptoms predicted a four-year-old's fussy eating behaviour, irrespective of whether she had the symptoms when the child was three. The results were similar for the fathers.   
  
The study "strongly suggests that the direction of the associations with mothers' antenatal symptoms is from mother to child," said the team from Erasmus MC-University Medical Centre in Rotterdam, Netherlands.   
  
"Clinicians should be aware that not only severe anxiety and depression, but also milder forms of internalising problems can affect child eating behaviour," they added.   
  
Fussy eating behaviour, which is characterised by the consistent rejection of particular foods, is common in childhood, and a frequent source of concern for parents, the researchers explained, in the study published online in the Archives of Disease in Childhood.   
  
Previously, it has been associated with constipation, weight problems and behavioural issues in the child.   
  
The analysis was based on 4,746 mother and child pairs and 4,144 dads, whose children had all been born between 2002 and 2006.   
  
Parents were asked to complete a validated questionnaire during mid pregnancy, and then again three years later, to assess their own symptoms of anxiety and depression.