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Nexis search: ectopic pregnancy, Chlamydia

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| The Express  January 12, 2011 Wednesday  Scottish Edition  Sex infection risks lives of mums-to -be  **BYLINE:** By Judith Duffy  **SECTION:** NEWS; 10  **LENGTH:** 289 words  A TIMEBOMB sex disease that affects thousands of young women can increase the risk of a potentially fatal **ectopic pregnancy**, Scottish scientists have found.  Researchers discovered that women who contract **chlamydia**, which often goes undetected, were more likely to produce a particular protein that increases the chance of an embryo implanting outside the womb.  Latest figures show 8,355 cases of **chlamydia** were recorded in Scotland in 2009. Nearly four out of 10 were in women aged 24 and under.  The study is said to be the first evidence of how **chlamydia** can increase the risk of an **ectopic pregnancy**.  The infection is already known to cause infertility as it can lead to scarring and blockages in the Fallopian tube. But the research has revealed it can also cause much more subtle changes to the reproductive system.  Dr Andrew Horne, of the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Reproductive Biology, said: "We hope that this new information allows health care providers to give women accurate information about risks following chlamydial infection and to support public health messages about the importance of safer sex and **chlamydia** testing."  The study, published in the American Journal of Pathology, found that women who had the sexually transmitted infection (STI) were more likely to produce protein PROKR2, which increases the chances of an **ectopic pregnancy**, where the egg implants in the Fallopian tube.  **Ectopic pregnancy** affects around 30,000 women in the UK every year, and can affect future fertility. In rare cases if the Fallopian tube is ruptured, it can cause massive internal bleeding and death.  **Chlamydia** is the most common STI in the UK. It can be treated but often goes undiagnosed because it can occur without symptoms.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | http://www.lexisnexis.com:80/uk/nexis/images/s.gif |  | | | http://www.lexisnexis.com:80/uk/nexis/images/s.gif | | http://www.lexisnexis.com:80/uk/nexis/images/s.gif | |

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**Chlamydia and ectopic pregnancy linked**

An ectopic pregnancy is when an embryo implants outside the womb in the Fallopian tube

**Women who have had chlamydia are at greater risk of an ectopic pregnancy because of a lasting effect of the infection, according to new research.**

A study by Edinburgh University experts has shown for the first time of how the sexually-transmitted infection can increase the risk of ectopic pregnancy.

An ectopic pregnancy is when an embryo implants in the Fallopian tube.

Women who have had chlamydia are more likely to produce a protein in their Fallopian tubes, the study said.

Increased production of this protein, known as PROKR2, makes a pregnancy more likely to implant outside of the womb.

**Sexually transmitted**

The study follows on from research, also at Edinburgh University, which showed that production of a similar protein increased the likelihood of smokers having an ectopic pregnancy.

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the UK. It can be treated but often goes undiagnosed because it can occur without symptoms.

The infection is known to cause infertility as it can lead to scarring and blockages in the Fallopian tube.

The research shows, however, that chlamydial infection linked to ectopic pregnancy causes "much more subtle changes" in the Fallopian tube, without evidence of severe scarring.

The study, published in the American Journal of Pathology, was funded by the Wellbeing of Women and the Medical Research Council.

Dr Andrew Horne, of Edinburgh University's centre for reproductive biology, said: "We know that chlamydia is a major risk factor for ectopic pregnancy but until now we were unsure how the infection led to implantation of a pregnancy in the Fallopian tube.

"We hope that this new information allows health care providers to give women accurate information about risks following chlamydial infection and to support public health messages about the importance of safer sex and chlamydia testing."

**Related Internet links**

* [**The University of Edinburgh**](http://www.ed.ac.uk/home)
* [**American Journal of Pathology**](http://www.journals.elsevierhealth.com/periodicals/ajpa/)
* [**Wellbeing of Women**](http://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/)
* [**Medical Research Council**](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/)