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Adiposity, Dysmetabolic Traits and Earlier Onset of Female Puberty in Adolescent Offspring of Women with Gestational Diabetes Mellitus: A clinical study within the Danish National Birth Cohort.

Running title: Gestational diabetes impacts offspring health

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Abstract

Offspring of pregnancies affected by gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) are at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. However, the extent to which these dysmetabolic traits may be due to offspring and/or maternal adiposity is unknown.

Objective: We examined body composition and associated cardio-metabolic traits in 561 9-16 year old offspring of GDM and 597 control offspring.

Research Design and Methods: We measured anthropometrics, puberty status, blood pressure, fasting glucose, insulin, C-peptide and lipids levels and dual energy X-ray (DEXA) scan in a subset of the cohort. Differences in the outcomes between GDM offspring and controls were examined using linear and logistic regression models.

Results: After adjustment for age and gender, GDM offspring displayed higher weight, BMI, WHR, systolic blood pressure and resting heart rate and lower height. GDM offspring had higher total and abdominal fat percentages and lower muscle mass percentages, but these differences disappeared after correction for offspring BMI. GDM offspring displayed higher fasting plasma glucose, insulin, C-peptide, HOMA-IR and plasma triglycerides, whereas fasting plasma HDL-cholesterol levels were decreased. Female GDM offspring had an earlier onset of puberty than control offspring. GDM offspring had significantly higher BMI, WHR, fasting glucose and HOMA-IR after adjustment for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI, and glucose and HOMA-IR remained elevated in GDM offspring after correction for both maternal and offspring BMI.

Conclusions: In summary, adolescent offspring of GDM women show increased adiposity, an adverse cardio-metabolic profile and earlier onset of puberty among girls. Increased fasting glucose and HOMA-IR among GDM offspring may be explained by programming effects of hyperglycemia in pregnancy.

Offspring of mothers with gestational diabetes (GDM) are at increased risk for developing obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes (1-4). Maternal obesity is one of the most important risk factors of both GDM and offspring adiposity, and the extent to which maternal obesity explains offspring adiposity and associated dysmetabolic traits independent of other factors including hyperglycaemia in pregnancy is controversial and the particular impact of hyperglycemia per se on offspring metabolic health is debated (5,6). Whereas intensified glucose lowering treatment of GDM women reduced macrosomia at birth, no beneficial effect on offspring adiposity or associated cardio-metabolic dysfunctions at age 5-10 years was seen (7,8).

Few studies have examined the impact of GDM on adiposity and insulin resistance during adolescence, and the joint influence of these factors on the onset of puberty. Early onset is associated with emotional challenges and can result in short stature, both of which may have influence at the individual and public health level. One study examined the impact of GDM on adiposity and metabolic variables across 5 puberty stages and found no difference in puberty development between GDM offspring and controls, but an increase in body fat percentages during all Tanner stages (9).

Previous studies of GDM offspring have been variable size (n=24-1475 cases) with the largest studies having only few clinical measurements such as height, weight and weight to hip-ratio in the offspring (10,11). In the present study, we report clinical and metabolic characteristics including body composition and puberty status in a large cohort of 9-16 years old offspring of women with and without previous GDM recruited from the Danish National Birth Cohort (DNBC) (12). Additionally, we examine the association of GDM with offspring metabolic disease and puberty development while accounting for offspring and maternal degree of adiposity.

Research design and methods

Subjects

Participants were recruited from the DNBC that enrolled 91,827 primarily Caucasian women collectively contributing more than 100,000 pregnancies between January 1996 and October 2002 as described in detail elsewhere (12). Briefly, data collection included 4 telephone interviews in gestation weeks 12 and 30, and 6 and 18 months postpartum. From the DNBC we included 1350 women with a diagnosis of GDM and 2629 randomly selected controls and invited them and their offspring to participate in a clinical follow-up examination in 2012 March - 2014 April (13). In total, 608 (44%) case mother-offspring pairs and 626 (28%) control mother-offspring pairs participated. Main reason for non-participation was lack of time. We excluded multiple births including 33 twins (31 GDM), 3 triplets (all GDM) and only included the first sibling in our analyses (80 siblings in total, 40 kept in analyses) to avoid correlated measures. This left us with 561 GDM offspring and 597 control offspring in our analyses (Figure 1). The offspring were 9-16 years old at the time of examination. The study was approved by the Regional Scientific Ethics Committee for the municipalities of Copenhagen and Frederiksberg (H-4-2011-045 and H-4-2013-129). Consent from both parents was essential for the participation of the child in the study.

Diagnosis of GDM

Initially, we used two different sources to identify women with a history of GDM. Women were classified with a diagnosis of GDM if they had responded positively to a question about GDM in at least one of the interviews conducted in gestation week 30 or 6 months postpartum, respectively. Furthermore, we used the Danish National Patient Register to extract information about diagnoses of GDM (ICD-10 classification: O244 and O249). Women with a self-reported diagnosis of GDM and/or an ICD-10 diagnosis and/or were classified as having had suspected GDM in our main analyses. Additionally, in sensitivity analyses we used an alternative diagnosis of GDM defined as

“best clinical judgement”. This diagnosis was based on a thorough review by two clinicians of hospital records of 96.5% of all GDM cases classified as described above. The ‘best clinical judgement’ or verified GDM diagnosis was based upon several available data such as blood glucose measurements if available, or on other notes from the doctor indicating GDM. In the sensitivity analyses in the present paper, only those with GDM based upon the “the best clinical judgment” were included (n=332).

In Denmark a risk factor based screening for GDM with a 75 g diagnostic oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) was recommended during 1996-2002. If results from 75 g 3 hour OGTT was available from the hospital records, GDM was diagnosed if two or more glucose values exceeded the mean +3 SDs on a curve based on a group of 40 Danish healthy, nonobese, nonpregnant women without a family history of diabetes. However, in a few smaller departments the WHO criteria was used. The diagnosis of the GDM women is described in detail in (14).

Clinical examinations:

All participating offspring underwent a clinical examination that included anthropometric, metabolic and body composition measurements. Offspring were weighed without shoes and lightly dressed. We measured waist circumference at the level of umbilicus using a soft tape on standing subjects. Hip circumference was measured over the widest part of the gluteal region. After 10 minutes, the resting blood pressure and heart rate were measured with an Omron blood pressure device in supine position. All measurements were taken twice and if the differences exceeded 0.5 cm or 0.5 kg for the anthropometric measurements, or 5 mmHg for blood pressure measurements, a third measurement was taken. In all analyses, the mean value of the measurements was used.

Offspring metabolic outcomes were obtained from a fasting blood sample that was taken during the clinical examination, and plasma, serum, buffy coat and whole blood (PAXgene) was collected.

Blood samples for glucose measurements were drawn in K-oxalat-Na-fluoride vials and in lithium-heparin vials for insulin, C-peptide and lipid traits. All parameters were measured using standard laboratory methods on the Modular P-module (Roche, Mannheim, Germany). Coefficients of variance were 4 -5 % for glucose, insulin, total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and triglycerides and 8 % for C-peptide. HOMA-IR was calculated as $([(\text{Fasting plasma insulin (pmol/l)} * \text{fasting plasma glucose (mmol/l)}) / 22.5] * 0.144)$ (15).

In order to determine the puberty status of the study participants, clinical evaluations were made including pubertal staging of breast development and pubic hair for the girls according to Tanner's classifications (16,17). Breast stage \geq B2 or girls pubic hair stage \geq PH2 was considered to be a marker of pubertal onset. Among the boys, a testicular volume of \geq 4 ml, pubic hair stage \geq PH2 or boys genital stage \geq G2 was considered to be a marker of pubertal onset. A total of 238 GDM offspring and 256 control offspring agreed to have at least one of the Tanner score examinations performed. Finally, body composition outcomes were evaluated in a subset (n=637) of the offspring who had a dual energy x-ray (DEXA) scanning performed (GE Healthcare, Lunar Prodigy Advanced EnCore, including pediatric software).

Statistical analyses

Normally distributed, continuous outcomes were described using mean and standard deviation (SD), whereas median and inter quartile range (IQR) were used for skewed, continuous outcomes. Differences in anthropometric, metabolic, and body composition outcomes between offspring exposed to GDM and control offspring were examined using linear regression models. For normally distributed outcome variables, we calculated β coefficients and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) to estimate mean differences, whereas skewed variables were log-transformed and for these we

calculated % differences and 95% CIs. We used logistic regression models to analyze puberty status and calculated odds ratios (ORs) and 95% CIs.

A priori we decided to first adjust for offspring age at the clinical examination and to analyze the age-adjusted estimates separately for boys and girls to investigate potential sex-specific differences. Because we did not see any marked differences between male and female offspring in the effect estimates, we decided to include offspring sex in our minimally adjusted model as a potential confounder rather than to stratify on sex. To examine whether observed cardio-metabolic differences were explained by the offspring's own degree of adiposity, we included a model with adjusting for offspring BMI and one model with additional adjustment for offspring WHR. For those variables that remained statistically significantly different between GDM and control offspring after adjustment for offspring BMI and WHR, we subsequently conducted analyses in which we adjusted for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI (in categories <18.5 kg/m², 18.5-24.99 kg/m², 25-29.99 kg/m² and ≥ 30 kg/m²). Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI was obtained from telephone interviews in gestation week 12. We did not adjust for other potential confounding variables, since our main aim was to determine if any observed differences were related to maternal obesity or hyperglycemia in pregnancy, rather than teasing out the contribution of a range of other potential confounding variables.

In addition, we stratified for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI in four groups to examine if there were differences when comparing GDM offspring to controls across groups of maternal pre-pregnancy BMI. Additionally, we performed analyses in a sub-sample of women where GDM (N=332) was defined according to 'best clinical judgement' (14) compared to controls.

Results

Table 1 presents the clinical characteristics of the offspring. There was an even sex distribution among case and control offspring, but control offspring were slightly older than GDM offspring at the time of follow-up, which was due to a time displacement for the examination time for some of the control offspring. When we adjusted for this age difference, GDM offspring were heavier and had a higher BMI, larger waist and hip circumferences, elevated WHR, as well as increased systolic blood pressure and heart rate compared to control offspring (Table 1). Furthermore, GDM offspring had higher fasting whole blood and fasting plasma glucose levels, as well as higher fasting plasma insulin, fasting C-peptide and HOMA-IR levels. In addition, the GDM offspring had an unhealthier plasma lipid profile with higher triglyceride and lower HDL levels. GDM offspring also had higher total fat percentages, more abdominal fat, and lower lean body mass percentages than control offspring. Among the female GDM offspring the odds of having reached puberty based on Tanner stage for breast development was almost doubled compared to control offspring. No differences in puberty development were observed between male GDM versus control offspring (Table 1). After adjustment for puberty status, we still observed significant differences in the insulin resistance markers between GDM and control offspring (data not shown).

Since adiposity is one of the most important risk factors for insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD) (18), we examined whether the adverse cardio-metabolic profile among GDM offspring was explained by their increased adiposity compared to controls. When adjusted for offspring BMI, GDM offspring still had significantly higher waist circumference, WHR, fasting plasma glucose, fasting insulin level and HOMA-IR levels (Table 2). Blood pressure, fasting C-peptide levels, lipid profile and data on body composition obtained from a DEXA scan were not significantly different between the two groups after adjustment for offspring BMI (Table 2). In addition, the association with earlier onset of puberty among female GDM offspring was no longer significant after adjustment for the offspring's own BMI (Figure 2). Adjusting for offspring

BMI Z-score instead of BMI did not change our results (data not shown). Additionally, GDM offspring displayed significantly higher fasting glucose (1.04 (1.02;1.05) $p < 0.0001$) and HOMA-IR (1.09 (1.02;1.16) $p = 0.006$) after further adjustment for WHR.

As adiposity is highly heritable (19,20) we subsequently examined if the increased BMI, waist circumference and WHR together with the adverse metabolic profile among the GDM offspring could be explained by maternal obesity before pregnancy. After adjustment for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI, GDM offspring still had higher BMI (Table 2). WHR, waist circumference, fasting glucose and HOMA-IR were all significantly higher in GDM offspring after further adjustment for both offspring BMI and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI (Table 2). Interestingly, the difference in the anthropometric, metabolic and body composition outcomes between GDM offspring and controls appeared to be stronger among offspring whose mothers were normal weight in pregnancy ($18.5 < \text{BMI} < 25$) compared to overweight ($\text{BMI} = 25-30$) or obese ($\text{BMI} > 30$) (Table 3). Among obese mothers, no differences were observed between GDM offspring and controls.

Finally, defining the GDM diagnosis using ‘best clinical judgement’ and only including offspring of hospital records GDM diagnosis resulted in similar or stronger associations, supporting our findings in all cases (supplementary table 1).

Discussion

We found that 9-16 year old offspring of GDM mothers had the following characteristics: 1) higher BMI, WHR, fat percentages and lower lean mass percentages, 2) increased fasting glucose, insulin and C-peptide, HOMA-IR, systolic blood pressure and triglycerides as well as reduced HDL-cholesterol levels, and 3) female offspring had an earlier onset of puberty. Interestingly, after adjustment for the offspring’s own BMI and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI, GDM offspring still had

significantly higher fasting glucose, HOMA-IR and WHR, but differences in onset of puberty disappeared.

Previous studies have shown that exposure to GDM was associated with higher BMI, waist circumferences and increased subscapular to triceps skinfold ratio (21), increased fat mass and central adiposity among GDM male offspring (22) and an increased risk of overweight and obesity among GDM offspring (11). In these studies, the associations between maternal hyperglycemia and offspring adiposity were attenuated but still significant after adjustment for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI. In adult offspring born to mothers with GDM, BMI was on average 0.94 kg/m^2 greater than in their brothers born before the mother was diagnosed with diabetes suggesting that it is most likely due to intrauterine mechanisms and not familial confounding (10). A meta-analysis by Philipps *et al.* concluded that maternal diabetes was associated with increased offspring BMI z-score, but that this was no longer significant after adjustment for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI (6). However, only five studies had data available on maternal pre-pregnancy BMI and four of these were based on small sample sizes, and the adjusted analyses were made on all diabetic pregnancies and not only pregnancies affected by GDM. Others studies have found increased total fat percentages and increased lean mass measured by DEXA scans in prepubertal offspring of mothers with GDM; however, in these studies no adjustment for offspring BMI or maternal pre-pregnancy BMI was made (23,24). Taken together, our study highlights the importance of adjusting for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI when analysing the impact of maternal hyperglycemia in pregnancy on offspring's degree of obesity. We a priori chose not to include birth weight in our analyses since we considered birthweight as a mediator of the association between GDM and later risk of obesity among the offspring. However, if we adjusted for birthweight there was still a significant difference between GDM and control offspring with regards to adiposity measurements such as BMI, waist circumference, total fat percentages and gynoid and android fat while birthweight per se

independently was associated with offspring BMI and waist circumference but not with DEXA (data not shown)".

Our finding of higher systolic blood pressure in GDM offspring was also observed in 3 years old offspring, where after adjustment for the offspring's skinfold thicknesses, the association between GDM and increased systolic blood pressure was no longer significant (25). Similar to our findings, a meta-analysis showed that GDM offspring had higher systolic blood pressure, but no difference in diastolic blood pressure as compared with control offspring was observed. However, all these studies had smaller GDM offspring samples, no adjustment for offspring BMI and no significant association between offspring systolic blood pressure and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI was found in five of the studies where data on maternal pre-pregnancy BMI was available (26). In contrast, in 3-17 year old GDM offspring no association between GDM and offspring blood pressure was found (27). However, the latter study included a smaller sample size and the GDM diagnosis was based upon one single question on a questionnaire.

Our findings of multiple early disturbances in the cardio-metabolic system in offspring of GDM pregnancies are in line with previous smaller studies. However, not all previous studies adjusted the disturbances in the cardio-metabolic traits for the offspring's own degree of adiposity (1,3,28). Similar to our results other studies adjusted for offspring BMI and reported an attenuation, but still significant association, of the impact of GDM on offspring insulin insensitivity and risk of future type 2 diabetes (29,30). One study showed that adult offspring born to women with GDM had reduced insulin sensitivity compared to offspring from the background population, also after adjusting for sex and overweight (2). Holder *et al.* followed obese adolescents for an average of 2.8 years and found that insulin sensitivity at follow-up were significantly lower in the group that had been exposed to GDM (n=45) in utero after adjusting for offspring BMI (31). Additionally, others

have found that greater maternal glucose concentration in pregnancy was associated with reduced insulin sensitivity and greater static beta cell response after a meal tolerance test in 21 pre-pubertal children, independent of the children's own fat percentages measured by DXA scanning (32). In the present study we found that the C-peptide levels were no longer significantly different between GDM and control offspring after adjustment for offspring BMI, whereas fasting insulin levels remained significant. We speculate that the difference in levels of statistical significance represents variations of the assays used rather than biologically important differences in insulin and C-peptide kinetics. Indeed, the confidence interval for C-peptide was substantially larger than the confidence interval for insulin. Alternatively, the relatively increased plasma insulin compared with plasma C-peptide levels among GDM offspring could reflect lower insulin clearance as a result of insulin resistance. C-peptide is cleared by the kidneys and therefore not influenced by insulin resistance (33).

We found that the probability of having reached puberty assessed by breast development, considered the golden standard for evaluating puberty onset and development among girls (34), was doubled among offspring of GDM mothers. In contrast, others showed no differences in Tanner stages among GDM and non-GDM offspring in analyses when boys and girls were analyzed together (35). One study showed that GDM was associated with a two months earlier transition to Tanner stage >2 examined by pubic hair development among boys (36). However, these studies did not adjust for offspring BMI. There is a general agreement that a higher fat mass or higher BMI among girls is associated with an earlier onset of puberty (37,38), which supports our results that the earlier onset of puberty among GDM female offspring is mainly driven by the offspring's BMI and emphasizing the importance of adjusting for offspring adiposity when addressing the impact of hyperglycemia on puberty development.

Our results stratifying on maternal pre-pregnancy BMI, suggest that hyperglycemia may be more relevant in the absence of severe maternal adiposity, i.e. the impact of hyperglycemia on offspring's body composition may be overruled by severe obesity in the mother. This is in accordance to a recent study, also based on the DNBC, showing that the effect of maternal fasting plasma glucose in pregnancy on offspring obesity at 7 year, appeared more pronounced among non-obese GDM women compared with obese GDM women (39). However, more studies are needed to understand the separate role and the combined potential superimposing effect of maternal hyperglycemia and of maternal obesity during pregnancy, on their offspring metabolic health.

Besides maternal obesity and hyperglycemia, other factors such as paternal obesity influence the offspring's level of obesity and adiposity. The strengths of this study included a large sample of GDM pregnancies and good statistical power to examine long-term consequences of intrauterine hyperglycemia in this longitudinal study with more than ten years of follow-up. Detailed data were available on body composition, cardio-metabolic factors, and clinical assessments of puberty onset in the offspring, allowing for more precise phenotypical characterization. Since puberty is, among other factors, characterized by insulin resistance (40), it is an enormous strength in the present study that we can take the stage of pubertal development into account.

The present study had some limitations. The GDM group contained both confirmed and suspected cases and may therefore have included women without GDM. Nonetheless, a sensitivity analysis of groupings based on clinician's best judgement in a subsample of the women did not alter the results. Another limitation is that a few smaller departments used the WHO criteria and not the commonly used Danish criteria for GDM. While detailed clinical data was available for the offspring, comparable information was not available for mothers or fathers for the relevant time period. For example, no detailed measures of maternal body composition were available for the pre-pregnancy period, and no data on paternal health was available to account for any genetic predisposition.

However, the explained genetic variance for most complex diseases is $\leq 10\%$ and thus the impact on our results may not have been substantial. Misclassification of reported maternal BMI is likely to have been more prevalent at higher BMI values, and may have underestimated the frequencies in overweight and obese categories. This would have led to residual confounding in the models adjusting for maternal BMI. We also lacked data on postnatal environment, and possible shared social and familial obesogenic risk factors such as diet. Dietary information for both parents and offspring was not available until teen years. Although parental and offspring diets during this time period were only weakly correlated (Bjerregaard A.A, preliminary data), we cannot exclude that stronger correlations existed earlier in childhood. Our data on puberty may also be subjective to selection bias, since the boys and girls that did not want to participate in the puberty examination, were often also those that were older and had attained puberty. Since the DEXA scanning was only available at the Copenhagen University Hospital, it was only offspring examined at this location that was offered a DEXA scan. This may have caused some bias, since the mothers of offspring with a DXA scan were older, had higher socio economic status and lower pre-pregnancy BMI. However, these differences were similar for the two exposure groups, which suggest that any present bias may be minor. Furthermore, we cannot exclude that our results to some extent may be due to other confounding factors such as socio-economic status or breastfeeding duration, rather than hyperglycemia and maternal obesity per se.

In conclusion, we demonstrated that 9-16 year old offspring of GDM mothers had higher BMI, WHR and higher fat percentage with more abdominal obesity, higher systolic blood pressure, fasting glucose, insulin and C-peptide levels and higher HOMA-IR and an earlier onset of puberty among girls. The association to higher blood pressure, higher fasting C-peptide levels, adverse lipid profile and earlier onset of puberty seemed driven by the offspring's own BMI, whereas GDM

offspring still had higher WHR, fasting glucose and HOMA-IR even after adjustment for both the offspring's own BMI and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI. This supports an independent role of hyperglycemia in pregnancy programming body composition as well as insulin resistance among adolescent offspring.

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Conflict of interest: Dr. Damm reports: Participate in a multicenter, multinational study by Novonordisk A/S as investigator on the use of insulins in pregnancy in women with type 1 and type 2 diabetes . All other authors have nothing to disclose

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Figure legends

Figure 1.

Flow chart of enrolment and examination of women and children in the Diabetes and Women's Health Study.

Figure 2.

Differences in offspring puberty status comparing GDM offspring to control offspring. Odds ratios are adjusted for offspring BMI

Table 1. Anthropometric, metabolic, body composition, and puberty characteristics of GDM offspring and controls at age 9-16 years.

| | Crude measurements | | P ^a | Age and sex adjusted estimates | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|---|----------------|
| | GDM offspring | Control offspring | | Mean difference or % difference* (95% CI) | P ^b |
| Anthropometric characteristics | N=546-561 | N=590-597 | | | |
| Age (years) | 12.1 (1.5) | 12.8 (1.5) | <0.001 | | |
| Sex (boys) | 295 (52.6%) | 301 (50.4%) | 0.68 | | |
| Weight (kg) | 48.5 (12.7) | 47.2 (12.1) | 0.08 | 4.66 (3.48, 5.84) | <0.001 |
| Height (cm) | 156.8 (11.4) | 159.5 (11.4) | <0.001 | 1.15 (0.27, 2.03) | 0.01 |
| BMI (kg/m ²)* | 18.8 (4.2) | 17.9 (3.4) | <0.001 | 9% (7-11%) | <0.001 |
| Waist (cm) | 73.3 (10.6) | 69.9 (8.4) | <0.001 | 4.92 (3.87, 5.98) | <0.001 |
| Hip circumference (cm) | 83.8 (9.6) | 82.7 (9.3) | 0.07 | 3.47 (2.55, 4.39) | <0.001 |
| Waist hip ratio (WHR) | 0.87 (0.06) | 0.85 (0.05) | <0.001 | 0.02 (0.01;0.03) | <0.001 |
| Head circumference (cm) | 55.8 (2.1) | 55.5 (2.2) | 0.18 | 0.51 (0.28, 0.75) | <0.001 |
| Systolic blood pressure (mmHg) | 109.7 (8.6) | 109.5 (8.6) | 0.75 | 1.04 (0.06, 2.01) | 0.04 |
| Diastolic blood pressure (mmHg) | 62.5 (6.0) | 62.6 (6.1) | 0.84 | -0.20 (-0.92, 0.51) | 0.58 |
| Heart rate (BPM) | 69.7 (2.1) | 68.1 (10.0) | 0.001 | 0.81 (-0.34, 1.96) | 0.17 |
| Metabolic characteristics | N=468-522 | N=508-559 | | | |
| Whole blood fasting glucose (mmol/l)* | 4.7 (0.8) | 4.5 (0.7) | <0.001 | 3% (1-5%) | 0.001 |
| Fasting plasma glucose (mmol/l)* | 5.0 (0.8) | 4.8 (0.6) | <0.001 | 4% (3-6%) | <0.001 |
| Fasting insulin (pmol/l)* | 69.4 (47.3) | 61.3 (34.7) | 0.001 | 17% (10-24%) | <0.001 |
| Fasting C-peptide (pmol/l) | 596 (211) | 575 (189) | 0.05 | 51 (28,74) | <0.001 |
| HOMA-IR* | 2.2 (1.6) | 1.9 (1.1) | <0.001 | 21% (14-30%) | <0.001 |
| Triglycerides (mmol/l)* | 0.73 (0.4) | 0.70 (0.4) | 0.58 | 5% (1-10%) | 0.04 |
| HDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | 1.5 (0.4) | 1.6 (0.4) | 0.11 | -0.07 (-0.11, -0.02) | 0.004 |
| LDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | 2.4 (0.7) | 2.3 (0.6) | 0.08 | 0.06 (-0.01, 0.14) | 0.11 |
| Total cholesterol (mmol/l) | 4.3 (0.7) | 4.2 (0.7) | 0.22 | 0.03 (-0.05, 0.12) | 0.47 |
| Body composition measured by DXA | N=191 | N=446 | | | |
| Total fat % | 31.2 (8.1) | 27.0 (7.0) | <0.001 | 3.45 (2.22, 4.69) | <0.001 |
| Total lean mass % | 66.2 (7.5) | 70.1 (6.5) | <0.001 | -3.21 (-4.37, -2.07) | <0.001 |
| Total android tissue % fat* | 25.6 (20.1) | 19.4 (13.8) | <0.001 | 22% (12-33#) | <0.001 |
| Total gynoid tissue % fat | 35.3 (8.3) | 31.2 (7.8) | <0.001 | 2.98 (1.71, 4.25) | <0.001 |
| Fat distribution (android/gynoid ratio) | 0.73 (0.2) | 0.66 (0.18) | <0.001 | 0.08 (0.05, 0.12) | <0.001 |
| Total bone mass density (mg/cm ²) | 0.9 (0.1) | 1.0 (0.1) | <0.001 | 0.02 (0.001, 0.03) | 0.04 |
| Puberty status | N=192-238 ^Y | N=176-256 ^Y | | | |
| Girls breast stage (n yes ≥B2, %) | 141 (59.2%) | 169 (66.0%) | 0.18 | 1.99 (1.18, 3.34) | 0.01 |
| Girls pubic hair (n yes ≥ PH2, %) | 99 (44.8%) | 133 (56.1%) | 0.06 | 1.51 (0.90, 2.55) | 0.12 |
| Boys testis size (n yes ≥ 4 ml, %) | 143 (74.5%) | 156 (85.7%) | 0.02 | 0.77 (0.42, 1.41) | 0.40 |
| Boys pubic hair (n yes ≥ PH2, %) | 50 (24.3%) | 60 (29.6%) | 0.02 | 1.74 (0.92, 3.28) | 0.09 |
| Boys genital stage (n yes ≥ G2, %) | 63 (32.6%) | 66 (37.5%) | 0.07 | 1.24 (0.72, 2.14) | 0.45 |

For the crude estimate data are presented as mean (SD) or median* (IQR) for normally and non-normally distributed variables, respectively.

When data are adjusted for age and sex they are presented as either mean difference, when the residuals are normal distributed, and as % difference when data are log transformed.

^aP-values calculated using Student's T-test, Kruskal Wallis test*, or Chi-square tests.

^Y Values are n (%) and adjusted estimates are odds ratios (95% CI) and are only adjusted for age.

P^b: age and sex adjusted measurements comparing GDM to control offspring

Android tissue % fat: Located in the abdominal area

Gynoid tissue fat %: Located around the hips

Table 2. Differences in offspring anthropometric and metabolic characteristics comparing GDM offspring to controls after adjustment for offspring age, sex and BMI and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI

| Offspring outcomes | Mean difference or % difference* (95% CI) | P^c | Mean difference or % difference* (95% CI) | P^d |
|---|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| Anthropometric characteristics | | | | |
| BMI (kg/m ²) [#] | - | - | 4% (2-6%) | <.0001 |
| Waist circumference (cm) | 0.83 (0.30;1.35) | 0.002 | 0.52 (-0.06;1.08) | 0.08 |
| Hip circumference (cm) | 0.01 (-0.48;0.49) | 0.97 | - | - |
| Waist hip ratio (WHR) | 0.009 (0.003;0.02) | 0.002 | 0.009 (0.002;0.02) | 0.01 |
| Head circumference (cm) | 0.17 (-0.05;0.40) | 0.13 | - | - |
| Systolic blood pressure (mmHg) | 0.30 (-0.70;1.30) | 0.55 | - | - |
| Diastolic blood pressure (mmHg) | -0.63 (-1.26; 0.11) | 0.09 | - | - |
| Heart rate (BPM) | 0.82 (-0.37;2.02) | 0.17 | - | - |
| Metabolic characteristics | | | | |
| Whole blood fasting glucose (mmol/l)* | 2% (1-4%) | 0.02 | 2% (1-4%) | 0.02 |
| Fasting plasma glucose (mmol/l)* | 4% (1-5%) | <.0001 | 4% (2-5%) | <.0001 |
| Fasting Insulin (pmol/l)* | 7% (1-13%) | 0.04 | 4% (-2-11%) | 0.18 |
| C-peptide (pmol/L) | 8.7 (-13;30) | 0.43 | - | - |
| HOMA-IR* | 11% (4-18%) | 0.002 | 8% (1-16%) | 0.02 |
| Triglycerides (mmol/l)* | 0% (-5-5%) | 0.92 | - | - |
| HDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | -0.02 (-0.07;0.02) | 0.30 | - | - |
| LDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | 0.003 (-0.07;0.08) | 0.93 | - | - |
| Total cholesterol (mmol/l) | -0.002 (-0.09;0.09) | 0.96 | - | - |
| Body composition measured by DXA | | | | |
| Total fat % | 0.72 (-0.17;1.61) | 0.11 | - | - |
| Total lean mass % | -0.70 (-1.54;0.14) | 0.10 | - | - |
| Total android tissue % fat* | 2% (-4-8%) | 0.50 | - | - |
| Total gynoid tissue % fat | 0.56 (-0.48;1.59) | 0.29 | - | - |
| Fat distribution (android/gynoid ratio) | 0.005 (-0.02;0.03) | 0.66 | - | - |
| Total bone mass density (mg/cm ²) | -0.007 (-0.02;0.007) | 0.30 | - | - |

*non-normally distributed variables

P^c adjusted for age sex and offspring BMIP^d adjusted for age sex and offspring BMI and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI # adjusted for age sex and maternal pre-pregnancy BMI Only variables that were significant after adjustment for offspring BMI were further adjusted for maternal pre-pregnancy BMI

Table 3. Age and sex-adjusted mean differences or % differences* (95 % CI) for offspring characteristics across groups of maternal pre-pregnancy BMI comparing GDM offspring to controls.

| | N | Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI <18.5 | p | N | Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI 18.5-<25 | p | N | Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI 25-<30 | p | N | Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI ≥30 | p |
|---|----|--|------|-----|--|--------|-----|--|------|-----|--|------|
| | | Mean difference or % difference * (95% CI) | | | Mean difference or % difference * (95% CI) | | | Mean difference or % difference * (95% CI) | | | Mean difference or % difference * (95% CI) | |
| Anthropometric characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weight (kg) | 44 | -2.04 (-7.64, 3.55) | 0.46 | 646 | 3.24 (1.79, 4.70) | <0.001 | 233 | 1.34 (-1.63, 4.31) | 0.37 | 180 | 1.43 (-2.86, 5.73) | 0.51 |
| Height (cm) | 44 | -2.63 (-9.01, 3.75) | 0.41 | 646 | 1.56 (0.36, 2.76) | 0.01 | 234 | -0.63 (-2.78, 1.52) | 0.57 | 180 | -0.08 (-2.97, 2.80) | 0.95 |
| BMI (kg/m ²)* | 44 | -2% (-12-9%) | 0.72 | 646 | 5% (3-7%) | <0.001 | 234 | 4% (-1-9%) | 0.12 | 180 | 3% (-3-10%) | 0.34 |
| Waist (cm) | 44 | 1.34 (-4.32, 7.00) | 0.63 | 645 | 2.66 (1.51, 3.82) | <0.001 | 232 | 3.00 (0.22, 5.78) | 0.03 | 180 | 2.25 (-1.86, 6.37) | 0.28 |
| Hip circumference (cm) | 44 | -1.74 (-5.90, 2.41) | 0.40 | 646 | 1.80 (0.66, 2.94) | 0.002 | 233 | 1.18 (-1.07, 3.43) | 0.30 | 179 | 1.68 (-1.61, 4.97) | 0.32 |
| Head circumference (cm) | 44 | -1.14 (-2.43, 0.15) | 0.08 | 644 | 0.42 (0.08, 0.76) | 0.01 | 230 | 0.53 (0.03, 1.03) | 0.04 | 179 | -0.22 (-0.98, 0.55) | 0.58 |
| Systolic blood pressure (mmHg) | 44 | -0.29 (-7.62, 7.04) | 0.94 | 645 | 1.56 (0.16, 2.97) | 0.03 | 231 | -0.54 (-2.74, 1.65) | 0.63 | 178 | -0.75 (-3.80, 2.30) | 0.63 |
| Diastolic blood pressure (mmHg) | 44 | 0.68 (-4.00, 5.36) | 0.77 | 644 | -0.34 (-1.37, 0.70) | 0.53 | 231 | 0.06 (-1.50, 1.62) | 0.94 | 178 | -1.22 (-3.54, 1.09) | 0.30 |
| Heart rate (BPM) | 44 | 8.87 (-1.48, 19.22) | 0.09 | 640 | 0.33 (-1.27, 1.93) | 0.69 | 227 | 1.94 (-0.74, 4.62) | 0.16 | 174 | -1.26 (-4.87, 2.34) | 0.49 |
| Metabolic characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Whole blood fasting glucose (mmol/l)* | 44 | 2% (-2-16%) | 0.79 | 609 | 2% (1-5%) | 0.07 | 222 | 4% (1-8%) | 0.02 | 165 | 1% (-3-6%) | 0.57 |
| Plasma glucose (mmol/l)* | 41 | -3% (-12-6%) | 0.46 | 574 | 4% (2-6%) | 0.0001 | 210 | 4% (1-7%) | 0.01 | 156 | 1% (-3-5%) | 0.64 |
| C-peptide (pmol/l) | 40 | 155 (-4, 313) | 0.06 | 572 | 26 (-5, 57) | 0.10 | 213 | -5 (-62, 52) | 0.87 | 154 | 43 (-33, 119) | 0.26 |
| Insulin (pmol/l)* | 39 | 10% (-14-59%) | 0.60 | 559 | 11% (2-21%) | 0.02 | 204 | -1% (-13-13%) | 0.99 | 150 | 19% (-1, 43%) | 0.06 |
| Triglycerides (mmol/l)* | 40 | 5% (-17-51%) | 0.79 | 573 | 5% (-1-11%) | 0.12 | 214 | -6% (-17-6%) | 0.29 | 154 | 8% (-8-27%) | 0.36 |
| HOMA-IR* | 39 | 9% (-27-62%) | 0.68 | 551 | 15% (5-26%) | 0.002 | 201 | 3% (-11-19%) | 0.68 | 148 | 22% (-1-50%) | 0.06 |
| HDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | 40 | -0.10 (-0.41, 0.20) | 0.50 | 573 | -0.03 (-0.10, 0.03) | 0.30 | 214 | -0.03 (-0.14, 0.08) | 0.57 | 154 | -0.01 (-0.15, 0.12) | 0.84 |
| LDL cholesterol (mmol/l) | 40 | 0.02 (-0.51, 0.55) | 0.94 | 573 | 0.02 (-0.09, 0.12) | 0.76 | 214 | 0.13 (-0.07, 0.33) | 0.19 | 154 | 0.03 (-0.23, 0.28) | 0.84 |
| Total cholesterol (mmol/l) | 40 | -0.01 (-0.64, 0.61) | 0.97 | 573 | 0.001 (-0.12, 0.12) | 0.98 | 214 | 0.15 (-0.07, 0.36) | 0.18 | 154 | -0.01 (-0.29, 0.26) | 0.93 |
| Body composition | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total fat % | 36 | 1.11 (-7.29, 9.50) | 0.79 | 393 | 2.03 (0.42, 3.64) | 0.01 | 113 | 1.34 (-1.63, 4.30) | 0.37 | 69 | 0.43 (-3.58, 4.43) | 0.83 |
| Lean mass % | 36 | -0.98 (-8.73, 6.77) | 0.80 | 393 | -1.91 (-3.40, -0.41) | 0.01 | 113 | -1.26 (-4.01, 1.50) | 0.37 | 69 | -0.47 (-4.19, 3.25) | 0.80 |
| Total android tissue % fat* | 36 | 6% (-43-97%) | 0.85 | 393 | 12% (1-26%) | 0.06 | 113 | 3% (-14-24%) | 0.74 | 69 | 1% (-19-26%) | 0.94 |
| Total gynoid tissue % fat | 36 | 0.69 (-8.02, 9.41) | 0.87 | 393 | 1.69 (-0.07, 3.45) | 0.06 | 113 | 0.72 (-2.19, 3.63) | 0.63 | 69 | 0.20 (-3.50, 3.90) | 0.92 |
| Fat distribution (android/gynoid ratio) | 36 | 0.06 (-0.17, 0.28) | 0.60 | 393 | 0.05 (-0.004, 0.09) | 0.05 | 113 | 0.02 (-0.06, 0.10) | 0.57 | 69 | 0.004 (-0.09, 0.10) | 0.94 |
| Total bone mass density (mg/cm ²) | 36 | -0.04 (-0.14, 0.06) | 0.44 | 393 | 0.01 (-0.01, 0.03) | 0.45 | 113 | 0.001 (-0.03, 0.04) | 0.96 | 69 | 0.01 (-0.04, 0.05) | 0.79 |