



## Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment

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### “Air Pollution and Pregnancy – What’s the Harm?”

- **Nothing is more important for a healthy baby than a healthy environment for the mother--clean air, clean water, good nutrition and as close to a chemical free environment as possible.**
- **The greatest impact of air pollution on public health is likely the potential harm that can result from a mother’s exposure during pregnancy. The lifelong health of her baby can be adversely influenced.**
- **Normal fetal growth and development is very sensitive to environmental influences. Contaminants in air and water can cross the placenta, directly and indirectly, affecting the formation of organs, especially the brain. The timing of exposure can be more important than the amount of exposure. Even brief episodes of air pollution can harm critical organ development. There are no second chances for proper intra-uterine brain development.**



- **Air pollution increases the rate of virtually all adverse pregnancy outcomes--high blood pressure and pre-eclampsia, miscarriages, still births, premature birth, low birth weight syndrome, gestational diabetes, intrauterine growth retardation, premature rupture of membranes, and birth defects.**
- **Air pollution can affect reproductive health, causing harm to sperm and ova, and can increase rates of infertility.**
- **Air pollution impairs the integrity of genes and the chemicals that control gene function, meaning that more than one generation can be put at risk.**