Background Worldwide, more than five million babies have been born as a result of assisted reproduction technology. Safety aspects are therefore critical to consider.

Aim By review of the literature to assess if children conceived by assisted reproduction technology are at increased risk of somatic morbidity after the newborn period compared with spontaneously conceived children.

Methods Medline/Pubmed, Embase and The Cochrane Library were searched on May 20, 2013. Studies on assisted reproduction technology and post-neonatal somatic diseases were included in the systematic review. Furthermore, health care contacts, chronic illnesses, surgery, medication and mortality were considered. Cohort and case-control studies were included. To assess the risk of bias in the individual studies, quality of all studies were evaluated independently by two of the authors, using the Newcastle-Ottawa Scale. The PRISMA statement for systematic reviews was followed.

Results Thirty-eight studies, out of 819 identified studies, were included. Results indicate that children conceived by assisted reproduction technology are at increased risk of leukaemia and retinoblastoma, asthma and obstructive bronchitis, genitourinary diseases, and epilepsy or convulsions when compared with spontaneously conceived children. Furthermore, it appears that children conceived by assisted reproduction technology are hospitalised longer per admission, compared with spontaneously conceived children.

Conclusion Children conceived by assisted reproduction technology may be at increased risk of various somatic diseases in childhood compared with spontaneously conceived children.

Background and aims Birthweight and weight gain have been associated with high adult blood pressure (BP). Less well known is the association between height gain across the life cycle and hypertension (HT). The objective of the present study is to assess the independent association of body mass index (BMI) and length at birth and BMI and height gains from birth to childhood, and from childhood to adulthood with adult blood pressure and HT.

Methods A prospective cohort of all living born in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil, was assessed at birth (1978/79), school-age (1987/89) and adulthood (2002/04). Data on neonatal variables, socioeconomic position and anthropometry of all three moments as well as adult risk factors for HT were present for 1141 subjects. Conditional weight analysis was performed to assess the independent association of BMI and height repeated-in-time measurements on adult HT.

Results After adjustments BMI at birth (inversely: RR = 0.58; 95% CI 0.35–0.96), BMI gain in adolescence (RR = 3.39; 95% CI 1.87–6.16) and height gain in childhood (RR = 1.95; 95% CI 1.12–3.38) were associated with adult HT. Adult systolic BP was associated with BMI at birth, BMI and height gains in childhood and adolescence. Diastolic BP was associated with BMI at birth, BMI gain in childhood and adolescence, and with height gain in childhood.

Conclusion Lower BMI at birth, higher height gain between birth and school age and higher BMI gain during the second decade of life were associated with adult HT. BMI and height also predict both systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

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