

Research Unpacked

In 2022, researchers Sarah Hampton, Carrie Allison, Simon Baron-Cohen, and Rosemary Holt did a research study called, “Autistic People’s Perinatal Experiences I: A Survey of Pregnancy Experiences.”

The study is online: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-022-05754-1>

What is the study about?



This study is about how Autistic people experience pregnancy and prenatal care.



The researchers asked 417 Autistic people and 524 non-Autistic people about their experiences during pregnancy.



The survey included questions about:

- sensory changes
- healthcare appointments
- support during pregnancy.



What did they find?



Many Autistic people said their senses, like touch and smell, became extra sensitive during pregnancy. This sometimes made going to the doctor hard.



Some people felt like doctors didn't listen to them or understand their needs. This made them feel unsupported.



Anxiety and depression were common during pregnancy for Autistic people.

What does this mean?



If you are Autistic and pregnant, you might find some things hard, like talking to doctors or dealing with your changing body. It's okay to ask for help.



Doctors and nurses can help more if they understand your sensory needs and listen to your questions.

You might feel better if you have a trusted person with you at appointments.

This study is important because it shows how to make pregnancy care better for Autistic people.