

Subject: DOHaD Digest: Summer 2024

Date: Wednesday, August 21, 2024



DOHaD

Digest

Summer 2024

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President's Note

Happy summer everyone!

A quick update from the DOHaD Canada President's Desk:

To start, I'd like to share with you some society news. Our society's Council recently welcomed a new Secretary and Treasurer. **Dr. John Krzeczowski** has stepped up to the plate as our new Secretary, taking over the reins from **Dr. Maria Ospina**, who we thank deeply for all her dedication and service to this important role. **Dr. Stephen Renaud** has taken over the account books and bank keys from me as Treasurer and will oversee our books as we move into 2024-25. As you may know, our last elections did not result in a new elected President. As per our Terms of Reference, and with the ending term of our current Interim President, **Dr. Anita Kozyrskyj**, Council appointed me as the new Interim President. I am honored to accept this caretaker position and, as stipulated in the Terms of Reference, will

work to organize special presidential elections within three months to facilitate stable leadership continuity for our society. To ensure a rigorous election process, your Council has reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference, to appropriately expand the criteria for the President position. Please keep your eyes peeled for the election announcement, which will include all the details and revised application criteria.

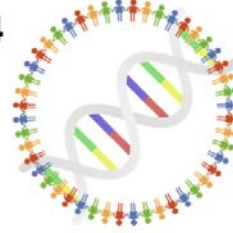
As we move to this special presidential election, I'd like to take a moment to thank Dr. Anita Kozyrskyj for her tireless leadership over the last 18 months. She has diligently guided your Council and its initiatives and has strongly advocated for DOHaD Canada's interests at the International DOHaD Society, especially as their reorganization has impacted our society and its operations. It has been a lot of work and we as a society are in a stronger, better place, and ready to move forward. Thank you, Anita! Along with Dr. Steve Matthews (most recent past President) and, before him, Dr. Steve Matthews and Dr. Deb Sloboda as original founding Co-Presidents, they have set big shoes for any new incoming President or Co-Presidents. While I feel a bit of trepidation, I am excited to begin my interim term and work with you all and your Council to set the society up for its next chapter.



7th Annual Meeting, 2024

Vancouver (BC) CANADA

JUNE 3-4, 2024



The Role of Early Life from Molecules to Communities

The 7th DOHaD Canada Annual Scientific Meeting took place in Vancouver, BC from June 3-4 this year. The theme for the meeting was 'The Role of Early Life from Molecules to Communities'. See the full program on the DOHaD Canada website [here](#).

In other society news, I'd like to take a moment to thank Dr. Julian Christians for his leadership in the recent [DOHaD Canada Annual Scientific Meeting](#). The 2024 meeting was both innovative and successful with over 70 participants and offered a preview into the exciting new developments in our field, with the majority of the work being presented by our trainees and Early Career Researchers (ECRs). Great job! Notably, it was our first year partnering with the [Perinatal & Child Health Research Annual Meeting](#) platform, a consortium of perinatal research groups from across the country, which provided attendees with a smorgasbord of perinatal research exposures from fundamental biomedical work, through pre-clinical and clinical work, and on through policy and

training/education platforms. We are now in the planning stages for our 8th DOHaD Canada Annual Scientific Meeting in 2025, so stay tuned for a 'Save the Date' announcement related to this premier event!

Moving on from society news, I hope you've found some good downtime, with family, friends, tasty new foods and a good bit of non-work reading! Recently, I broke my reading rule and dived into an editorial and series of articles from The Economist magazine, titled '[How to raise the world's IQ](#)'.

The editorial highlights how early life environment influences IQ, and the impact IQ has on cognitive potential and ultimately life, health, and well-being. Specifically, it notes that in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), poor nutrition and lack of stimulation can result in a loss of up to fifteen IQ points. It goes on to state that "Damage incurred during the 'golden window' of the first 1000 days after conception is likely to be permanent". It advocates for promoting better early life nutrition as part of health care systems, focusing on those crucial '1000 days'. While the editorial focused mainly on the LMIC settings, we know this idea spans all economic settings. For example, the recent [UNICEF Report 16](#) (which reports on the state of children and youth under

age 18 in wealthy countries), highlights that in Canada—a high-income country—there is a significant gap in providing healthy, happy childhoods for every child compared to other rich countries. Despite ranking high in economic, environmental, and social conditions for growing up, Canada has some of the poorest outcomes for children and youth. This report should be a call to action for us all.

For us in the DOHaD community, we live, work, and breath this idea of the ‘golden window’ of intervention discussed in *The Economist*. It is encouraging to see this concept highlighted in media beyond our scientific world. However, the editorial and reports such as the UNICEF Report 16 underscore how much more we must contribute as a community, locally, nationally, and internationally. In all branches of our work, our social networks, our research and teaching endeavours, we strive to enhance the health and well-being of future generations through understanding the mechanisms underlying the importance of the first 1000 days (and preconceptionally as well), working to develop informed and targeted interventions. These efforts, together with all the collaborations and other works of our friends and colleague’s across the globe, will all go a long way to

ensuring the best start in life for all and in no small measure help raise the world's IQ!

The Next DOHaD Canada Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Monday, August 26, 2024, from 2:00 to 3:00 pm EST.

The AGM is a significant event in our society's calendar, providing an opportunity for us to come together, reflect on the past year's achievements, discuss important matters, and plan for the future.

If you wish to attend the meeting, please contact the DOHaD Canada Office (office@dohad.ca)

We look forward to seeing you at the AGM!

Information for the next DOHaD Canada Annual General Meeting (AGM) as featured on the DOHaD Canada website homepage [here](#).

Finally, as I wrap-up this summer note, I'd like to remind you that your Council has been hard at work in 2023-24 year and I encourage you to attend the **Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Monday, August 26, 2024, from 2:00 – 3:00 pm EST**, to review DOHaD Canada's accomplishments this year and discuss future plans for 2024-25 and beyond. The Annual Report will also be presented, and I encourage you to read it to see the work being undertaken on your behalf and find opportunities to engage with the society in promoting its mission. I also urge you to renew your membership with DOHaD International and spread the word among your colleagues so we can continue to grow

and strengthen our DOHaD community in Canada.

If you wish to attend the meeting and/or review the Annual Report, please contact the DOHaD Canada Office at office@dohad.ca.

Thanks for reading this and now back to enjoying fun times with family and friends, tasty new foods and a good bit of non-work reading!

Chat in the Fall.

Best,

Tim Regnault
Interim President
DOHaD Canada

7th Annual DOHaD Canada Meeting

Meeting Debrief

The 7th annual DOHaD Canada Scientific Meeting was held at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver, BC, on June 3-4, 2024 and, for the first time, took place in collaboration with 9 other groups as part of the [Perinatal & Child Health Research Annual Meetings](#).

Attendance at the DOHaD Canada meeting included 35 trainees and 42 attendees at other career stages from across Canada, while the overall meeting attracted over 650 participants in total. Attendees enjoyed both a DOHaD Canada keynote from Dr. Tim Oberlander, as well as a consortium-wide keynote from Dr. Bernard Th  baud. The DOHaD Canada meeting overlapped with the Canadian National Perinatal Research Meeting (CNPRM), such that we had a shared session on “Early Life Nutrition and the Microbiome” with invited speakers Drs. Marie-Claire Arrieta and Deborah O'Connor, as well as a shared poster session. In addition to these speakers, DOHaD Canada sessions featured 6 talks from established researchers as well as 17 trainee oral presentations.



DOHaD Canada Keynote Speaker, Dr. Tim

Oberlander, presenting 'Maternal mental health in pregnancy: Setting early life developmental pathways for better and worse' at the 7th DOHaD Canada Annual Scientific Meeting.

Thanks to our collaboration with the other groups, who generously offered cost-sharing arrangements that were very favourable to DOHaD Canada, we had a balanced budget with a net profit of \$2,746.

Overall, the event was a great success, and we would like to thank everyone who contributed: session moderators, poster judges, oral presentation judges, all attendees and presenters, and the people who helped behind the scenes. Our generous sponsors included the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute and One Child Every Child, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Institute of Gender and Health, DOHaD International Society, Simon Fraser University and Western University. In addition to those who specifically sponsored the DOHaD Canada meeting, we are also grateful to the sponsors of the other groups who in turn supported us.

If you didn't have a chance to complete the post-event survey, please feel free to

provide feedback on the meeting by email to julian_christians@sfu.ca.

Presentation Awards

The CIHR Institute of Gender and Health generously funded two trainee awards to recognize the best integration of sex as a biological variable and/or gender as a social determinant of health into research.

- The winner of the oral presentation award was **Jessica Hercus (SFU, supervised by Dr. Julian Christians)** for a talk entitled: 'Do effects of prenatal nutrition on cardiovascular and metabolic health depend on gonadal sex and/or chromosomal sex?'
- The winner of the poster presentation award was **Elisabeth Bailin Xie (U Calgary, supervised by Dr. Lianne Tomfohr-Madsen)** for a poster entitled 'Pandemic objective hardship during pregnancy and child social-emotional outcomes at 2 years of age: A secondary analysis of the Pregnancy During the Pandemic Cohort.'

Thank you to all of the judges for their

participation and all the trainees for their exceptional presentations.

**Watch this space for updates on
the 2025 DOHaD Canada Annual
Scientific Meeting!**

**Date and location to be
announced...**

**13th DOHaD
World Congress**

**Join Us in Buenos Aires in
September 2025**

The 13th DOHaD World Congress is scheduled for 7th -10th September 2025, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Stay tuned for the launch of the new website, where you will find detailed information about the event and its offerings. Follow [@DOHaD2025](https://twitter.com/DOHaD2025) on X to stay up to date.

**13th DOHaD World Congress
Logo Unveiled**

On May 20, 2024, the International DOHaD Society unveiled the official logo

for the 13th DOHaD World Congress on X. Chosen from over 20 applicants, the logo design by Dr. Jenna Haverfield and Mr. Felipe Serrano features Inti, the revered Inca deity of the sun, and an homage to the Women's Bridge, a landmark from Buenos Aires. See more about the logo and the winning applicants in the full post on the DOHaD 2025 X account [here](#).



In May of 2024, the International DOHaD Society revealed the official logo for the 13th DOHaD World Congress, created by Logo Contest winners, Dr. Jenna Haverfield and Mr. Felipe Serrano. See the full post on X [here](#).

Webinars on the International DOHaD Society Website

Members of the International DOHaD Society can access past webinars from the DOHaD Worldwide Webinar Series for free! See the full program of 2024 webinars on their website [here](#).

We're proud that so many Canadian DOHaD scientists are prominently featured on this international platform! Most recently, **Serge McGraw** from University of Montreal presented on 'Mitigating the detrimental developmental impact of early fetal alcohol exposure using a maternal methyl donor-enriched diet.'

Upcoming webinars in the Fall feature Canadian DOHaD Scientists:

- September 18, 2024: **Kozeta Miliku** from the University of Toronto on 'Wheeze trajectories: Determinants and outcomes in the CHILD Cohort Study
- November 20, 2024: **Gerlinde Metz** from the University of Lethbridge on 'Sex-specific stress and biobehavioral responses to human experimenters in rats'

**Trainee
Development
Committee**

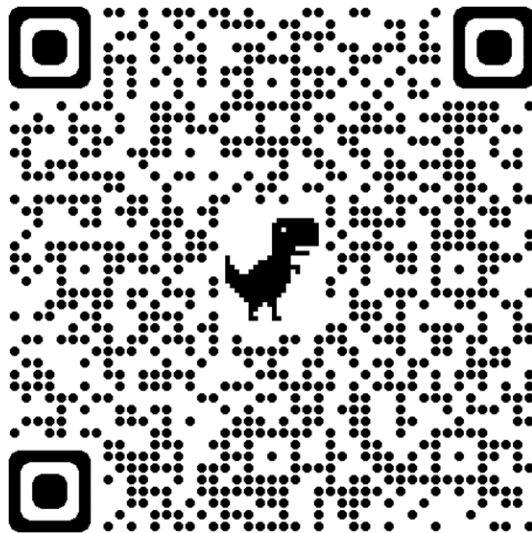
Welcome from your Trainee Development Committee (TDC)! To learn more about us please go to: <https://dohad.utoronto.ca/members-index/trainees/>. We have a few exciting announcements to share with you.

Join DOHaD Canada Trainees on Slack

We are very excited to invite you to the **DOHaD Canada Slack Page**. We hope that this will provide us with opportunities to interact, network, and learn.

If you are interested in being added to the DOHaD Canada Slack page, please fill out [this form](#).

Or you can use the QR code below to complete the form. To use the QR code to register, please open the camera app on your phone. Point your camera at the QR code, briefly wait, and then click on the link that appears. That link will take you to the registration form. We look forward to seeing you there!



DOHaD Canada TDC Seminar Series

We are excited to invite you to attend the TDC seminar series that are held **virtually** on a **bimonthly** basis, and usually on the second Friday of the month. Each Zoom seminar will feature a short presentation by a trainee, typically lasting 15-20 minutes. This will be followed by a Q&A, providing a supportive and constructive atmosphere for learning and growth.

The next seminar is scheduled for October 2024!

We also request that Faculty encourage their trainees to attend these seminars!

Interested in presenting at these seminars?

The DOHaD Canada TDC is seeking out DOHaD Canada **trainees** to present at future DOHaD Canada TDC Seminar Series! Please contact us at communications@dohad.ca if you are interested or have any questions.

Join the DOHaD Canada

Trainee Development Committee

The DOHaD Canada TDC is currently seeking trainees at all levels (Undergraduate, Graduate, and Postdoctoral) who are interested in serving as members-at-large on this committee. The TDC's mandate is to represent the interests and priorities of the trainee membership of DOHaD Canada within the larger Society and its Executive Council. The TDC also operates to enhance the experiences of and professional development opportunities for DOHaD Canada's trainee members.

As a member-at-large, you will support the TDC in:

- Organizing events (during the annual meeting or independent/satellite activities) that address trainee career development goals, inside and outside of the academic program;
- Maintaining communication between trainee membership, the TDC and, by extension, Executive Council;
- Fostering extensive inter-disciplinarity and community-building among trainee members;
- When applicable and appropriate, liaising with trainee groups of other scientific societies, including the International DOHaD Society.

We are also currently seeking **2 new members** to join the TDC, with a particular focus on inclusion of underrepresented identities in DOHaD (Black, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIAP+, and people living with disability), as well ensuring regional representation across Canada. If you are interested in this position, we ask that you complete an

expression of interest by submitting [this form](#) no later than **September 30th, 2024, 11:59 PM EDT**. You can also use the QR code below to complete the form.



Recent Accomplishments

Congratulations to Dr.

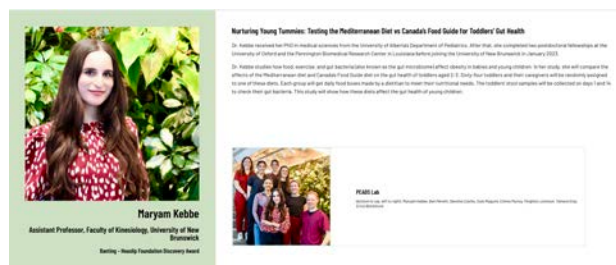
Maryam Kebbe

Dr. Maryam Kebbe at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) was awarded a prestigious Banting-Heaslip Foundation Discovery Award to study toddler diets - a rare and largely unexplored area of research. See her among the list of award winners on the Banting Research Foundation's website [here](#).

Dr. Maryam Kebbe also secured a

Canada Foundation for Innovation John R. Evans Leaders Fund that will equip her PEADS Lab (Perinatal Health & Developmental Support Laboratory) at the UNB with state-of-the-art body composition, metabolic, nutrition/human milk, and exercise equipment.

See Maryam also featured in the 'Recent Publications' section below for her work studying the interconnection between human milk components and the infant gut microbiome.



Dr. Maryam Kebbe is featured on the Banting Research Foundation's [website](#) in celebration of her receiving the 2024 Banting – Heaslip Foundation Discovery Award.

Congratulations to Dr. Deborah Dewey

Congratulations to Dr. Deborah Dewey at the University of Calgary and co-applicants on their successful Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Project Grant entitled 'The maternal and

childhood chemical exposome may be associated with children's neurodevelopment.' See the complete project summary below.

Also see the 'Recent Publications' section below for features of Dr. Deborah Dewey's works.

The maternal and childhood chemical exposome may be associated with children's neurodevelopment

Principal Applicant: Deborah Dewey

Co-Applicants: Dr. G. England-Mason, Dr. N. Forkert, Dr. G. Giesbrecht, Dr. N. Letourneau, Dr. K. Ross, Dr. M. Soomro

Congratulations to Dr. Shela Hirani

Congratulations to DOHaD Canada Council Member, Dr. Shela Hirani, for her 'GQNR 2023 Best Paper Award' in the the empirical category for her publication in Global Qualitative Nursing Research Journal. See the award-winning publication here:

Hirani SAA, Richter S, Salami B, Vallianatos H. Sociocultural Factors Affecting Breastfeeding Practices of Mothers During Natural Disasters: A Critical Ethnography in Rural Pakistan. Glob Qual Nurs Res. 2023 Jan

25;10:23333936221148808. [PMID:](#)
[36727108.](#)

Congratulations to Dr. Ashley Wezana

Congratulations to Dr. Ashley Wazana (Montréal-Jewish General) and his team for their 10-year CIHR grant on 'Identifying pathways for the emergence of mental health functioning in young adults from prenatal adversity, genetic susceptibility, the early environment, and intervening life stress - Leveraging hypotheses generated from an international birth cohort consortium'.

Congratulations to Drs. Meaghan Jones and Pablo Nepomnaschy

Congratulations to Drs. Meaghan Jones (U Manitoba) and Pablo Nepomnaschy (SFU) for their CIHR grant on 'Influence of socioecological factors on the pace of reproductive aging and the risk of cardiometabolic diseases in peri- and post-menopause - A reproductive life course study.'

Congratulations to Olivia

Wilding-Davies

Congratulations to Olivia Wilding-Davies, MSc student in the Connor Lab, who was accepted into the KT Canada Summer Institute (hosted in Halifax), where she presented her research on lessons learned, challenges, and opportunities for co-designing approaches to tackle iron deficiency in Benin.

Congratulations to Drs. Kristin Connor and Stephane Bourque

Two of DOHaD Canada's members, Drs. Kristin Connor (Carleton U) and Stephane Bourque (U Alberta) were elected by an international body of clinicians and scientists to serve on the council of the Society for Reproductive Investigation (SRI). SRI, which began in 1953, is an international society of nearly 1000 members in over 30 countries, with a mission to advance reproductive health for all, through: 1. outstanding basic, translational, and clinical science, 2. training and mentoring future generations of investigators, 3. embracing diversity, 4. advocacy engaging funding agencies, policy makers, donors and communities and, 5. promoting excellence in reproductive science globally. We are proud to have

Canada well-presented on SRI Council with these DOHaD and perinatal health experts and champions!

Recent Publications

Do you have publications to share in the next newsletter?

Submit them at anytime for inclusion in the next newsletter by emailing the details to dohadcanadaeco@gmail.com.

Human Milk and the Infant Gut Microbiome

Kebbe M, Shankar K, Redman LM, Andres A. Human Milk Components and the Infant Gut Microbiome at 6 Months: Understanding the Interconnected Relationship. J Nutr. 2024 Apr;154(4):1200-1208. doi: 10.1016/j.tjnut.2024.02.029. [PMID: 38442855](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38442855/).

- Dr. Maryam Kebbe discovered a potential role for cytokines in

human milk to prime the infant's gut response in early life

Impact of Maternal Posture and Gravity on Fetal Physiology

Coleman J, Grewal S, Warland J, Hobson S, Liu K, Kember A. Maternal positional therapy for fetal growth and customised birth weight centile benefit in a Bayesian reanalysis of a double-blind, sham-controlled, randomised clinical trial. *BMJ Open*. 2024 Apr 28;14(4):e078315. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2023-078315. [PMID: 38684260](#);

- In this publication, we demonstrated that there is a 95% probability that nightly maternal positional therapy to reduce supine sleeping from 28 weeks to birth will increase the customized birthweight centile by an average of 3 to 15%, which is a moderate effect size.
- We also wrote a Letter to the Editor of *AJOG* to point out the similar effect sizes: Kember AJ, Warland J, Hobson SR. Maternal rest improves growth in small-for-gestational-age fetuses (<10th percentile): a comment. *Am J*

Obstet Gynecol. 2024 Jun 29;S0002-9378(24)00726-9. doi: 10.1016/j.ajog.2024.06.036. [PMID: 38950669](#).

- All of this work is beginning to lend a promising impact to our positional therapy device for sleep during pregnancy, the [PrenaBelt](#), which has been commercially available since May 2022.

Kember AJ, Anderson JL, House SC, Reuter DG, Goergen CJ, Hobson SR. Impact of maternal posture on fetal physiology in human pregnancy: a narrative review. Front Physiol. 2024 May 17;15:1394707. doi: 10.3389/fphys.2024.1394707. [PMID: 38827993](#).

- This publication is a result of three years of work. In it, we analyze the literature from 1991 through 2021 investigating the impact of maternal posture on fetal physiology. The "sister review" to this paper (where we consider the impact of maternal posture on her own physiology) is below.

Kember AJ, Anderson JL, Gorazd NE, House SC, Kerr KE, Torres Loza PA, Reuter DG, Hobson SR, Goergen CJ. Maternal posture-physiology interactions in human pregnancy: a narrative review. Front Physiol. 2024 Jul 19;15:1370079. doi: 10.3389/fphys.2024.1370079.

[PMID: 39100275](#).

Kember AJ, Zia H, Elangainesan P, Hsieh ME, Adijeh R, Li I, Ritchie L, Akbarian S, Taati B, Hobson SR, Dolatabadi E. Transitioning sleeping position detection in late pregnancy using computer vision from controlled to real-world settings: an observational study. *Sci Rep*. 2024 Jul 29;14(1):17380. doi: 10.1038/s41598-024-68472-x. [PMID: 39075133](#).

- This paper features one of the models underlying the proposed DOSAGE Study.

The Impact of Prenatal CBD Exposure in Rats

DeVuono MV, Nashed MG, Sarikahya MH, Kocsis A, Lee K, Vanin SR, Hudson R, Lonnee EP, Rushlow WJ, Hardy DB, Laviolette SR. Prenatal tetrahydrocannabinol and cannabidiol exposure produce sex-specific pathophysiological phenotypes in the adolescent prefrontal cortex and hippocampus. *Neurobiol Dis*. 2024 Sep;199:106588. doi: 10.1016/j.nbd.2024.106588. [PMID: 38960101](#).

Lee K, Vanin S, Nashed M, Sarikahya

MH, Laviolette SR, Natale DRC, Hardy DB. Cannabidiol Exposure During Gestation Leads to Adverse Cardiac Outcomes Early in Postnatal Life in Male Rat Offspring. Cannabis Cannabinoid Res. 2024 Jun;9(3):781-796. doi: 10.1089/can.2023.0213. PMID: [38358335](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38358335/).

Allen S, Natale BV, Ejeckam AO, Lee K, Hardy DB, Natale DRC. Cannabidiol Exposure During Rat Pregnancy Leads to Labyrinth-Specific Vascular Defects in the Placenta and Reduced Fetal Growth. Cannabis Cannabinoid Res. 2024 Jun;9(3):766-780. doi: 10.1089/can.2023.0166. PMID: [38364116](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38364116/).

Recent Work from the Dewey Lab

Irvine N, Bell RC, Subhan FB, Field CJ, Liu J, MacDonald AM, Kinniburgh DW, Martin JW, Dewey D, England-Mason G; APrON Study Team. Maternal pre-pregnancy BMI influences the associations between bisphenol and phthalate exposures and maternal weight changes and fat accumulation. Environ Res. 2024 Sep 15;257:119276. doi: 10.1016/j.envres.2024.119276. PMID: [38830392](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38830392/).

Soomro MH, England-Mason G, Reardon AJF, Liu J, MacDonald AM, Kinniburgh DW, Martin JW, Dewey D; APrON Study Team. Maternal exposure to bisphenols, phthalates, perfluoroalkyl acids, and trace elements and their associations with gestational diabetes mellitus in the APrON cohort. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2024 Aug;127:108612. doi: 10.1016/j.reprotox.2024.108612. [PMID: 38782143](#).

Jembere F, Dewey D. Prenatal Vitamin B12 and Children's Brain Development and Cognitive, Language and Motor Outcomes: A Scoping Review. *Children (Basel).* 2024 May 7;11(5):558. doi: 10.3390/children11050558. [PMID: 38790553](#).

Merrill SM, Letourneau N, Giesbrecht GF, Edwards K, MacIsaac JL, Martin JW, MacDonald AM, Kinniburgh DW, Kobor MS, Dewey D, England-Mason G, The APrON Study Team. Sex-Specific Associations between Prenatal Exposure to Di(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate, Epigenetic Age Acceleration, and Susceptibility to Early Childhood Upper Respiratory Infections. *Epigenomes.* 2024 Jan 26;8(1):3. doi: 10.3390/epigenomes8010003. [PMID: 38390895](#).

England-Mason G, Anderson A, Bell RC, Subhan FB, Field CJ, Letourneau N,

Giesbrecht GF, Dewey D, The APrON Study Team. Maternal Pre-Pregnancy BMI and Gestational Weight Gain Are Associated with Preschool Children's Neuropsychological Outcomes in the APrON Cohort. *Children (Basel)*. 2023 Nov 25;10(12):1849. doi: 10.3390/children10121849. [PMID: 38136051](#).

Recent Publications from Dr. Shela Hirani

Hirani SAA. Barriers Affecting Breastfeeding Practices of Refugee Mothers: A Critical Ethnography in Saskatchewan, Canada. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2024 Mar 25;21(4):398. doi: 10.3390/ijerph21040398. [PMID: 38673311](#); [PMCID: PMC11050554](#).

Hirani, S. A. A. (2024). Effects of COVID-19 on breastfeeding practices of immigrant mothers in Canada: A Qualitative Study. *Science Talks*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sctalk.2024.100377> [Publisher: Elsevier; Open Access].

Hirani, S. A. A, & Souter, A. R. (2024). Effects of caffeine on breastfeeding mothers and infants: A scoping review. *Clinical Lactation*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1891/CL-2023-0036>

[Indexed in Web of Science Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI); Publisher: Spring Publishing Company]

Hirani SAA. Barriers to Women's Menstrual Hygiene Practices during Recurrent Disasters and Displacement: A Qualitative Study. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2024 Jan 30;21(2):153. doi: 10.3390/ijerph21020153. [PMID: 38397644](#).

Recent Publications from the Connor Lab

White M, Arif-Pardy J, Van Mieghem T, Connor KL. Fetal spina bifida associates with dysregulation in nutrient-sensitive placental gene networks: Findings from a matched case-control study. *Clin Transl Sci*. 2024 Jan;17(1):e13710. doi: 10.1111/cts.13710. [PMID: 38226444](#).

White M, Abdo H, Gynspan D, Mieghem TV, Connor KL. Altered placental immune cell composition and gene expression with isolated fetal spina bifida. *Am J Reprod Immunol*. 2024 Mar;91(3):e13836. doi: 10.1111/aji.13836. [PMID: 38528656](#).

Ongoing Studies

Seeking Fathers and Non-birthing Parents for an Online Survey

A team of researchers from IWK Health are seeking fathers and non-birthing parents to complete an online survey. They are interested to learn about how fathers and non-birthing parents in Canada experience the first 12 months after their infant's birth. For more information and to determine eligibility, please visit: <http://www.tinyurl.com/postpartumparents>



Photo promoting participant recruitment for an IWK Health study: Seeking fathers with infants under 1 year for an online research survey to share their parenting experience.



Photo promoting participant recruitment for an IWK Health study: Seeking non-birthing parents with infants under 1 year for an online research survey to share their parenting experience.

The DOSAGE Study is Seeking Collaborators and Funders

The Dose of Supine Sleep Affects fetal Growth: and Exposure-response (DOSAGE) Study is approaching its launch!

Researchers are looking for collaborators and potential funders for this study. Please contact Allan Kember (Allan.Kember@dal.ca) by email for more information.

See the 'Recent Publications' section

above for more of Allan Kember's work, including a paper on one of the models underlying the proposed DOSAGE Study (PMID: [39075133](#)).



Screengrab of DOSAGE Study with SLeep AIDePt Demo - Long video on YouTube. Click the image to navigate to the full video or follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vjh2wgegYEs>.

Research Opportunities

Join Our Research Team!

Graduate student scholarships, postdoctoral and professional research positions available.

Title of study: "Carrying life, carrying hunger: the urgency of nutritional equity in the perinatal context".

- Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

of Canada (SSHRC).

Study objective: This study, conducted in partnership with the [Olo Foundation](#), evaluates the provision of nutritional services in perinatal health in order to identify what works, for whom and in what circumstances.

Professors in charge:

- Bénédicte Fontaine-Bisson, DtP, PhD (School of Nutrition Sciences, University of Ottawa)
- Élise Carboneau, DtP, PhD (School of Nutrition, Université Laval)
- Alex Dumas, PhD (School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa)

Requirements:

- Fluency in French is essential as the study will be conducted in the province of Québec.
- Full-time enrolment in a master's or doctoral program at the University of Ottawa or Université Laval, or;
- Pursuit of a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Ottawa or Université Laval, or;
- Interest in employment as a research professional.

Financial support:

- Master's: \$17,500/year for two

years.

- Doctorate: \$20,000/year for three years.
- Postdoctoral/Research Professional: to be determined according to working conditions and experience.

Additional information: For further information, please contact Bénédicte Fontaine-Bisson (bfontain@uottawa.ca) and c.c. Élise Carbonneau (elise.carbonneau.1@ulaval.ca) and Alex Dumas (adumas@uottawa.ca).



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