

# Air pollution blamed for kids' poor scores

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Children exposed to intense urban air pollution while in the womb are 2.9 times more likely to be developmentally disabled at age 3, a New York study says.

The Columbia University research found 42 of 183 children exposed to the highest level of exhaust fumes from vehicles and power plants scored an average 5.7 points lower on cognitive tests administered at age 3.

"This is the first time it's been shown that in-utero exposure to air pollutants is linked to delayed cognitive development at age 3," chief researcher Frederica Perera told The New York Post. "They had a significant drop in scores."

Researchers said they did not know why the developmental problems did not show up earlier in the children who are part of the long-term "Mothers and Children Study of New York City" begun in 1998.

The federally supported research is examining the effects of air pollution, pesticides and allergens on mothers and their children.

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