

Want to avoid divorce? Wait to get married, but not too long, says researcher

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Credit: Jeff Belmonte / Wikipedia

For years, it seemed like the longer you waited to marry, the better. That's because the relationship between age at marriage and divorce risk was almost linear: The older you were, the lower the chances of divorce. Although teens still face an elevated divorce risk relative to older adults, a new analysis from University of Utah professor Nicholas Wolfinger

using more recent data shows that those who tie the knot after their early 30s are now more likely to divorce than those who marry in their late 20s.

Wolfinger analyzed data collected between 2006 and 2010 from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). He used [statistical methods](#) that permit nonlinear relationships to emerge (click [here](#) for more information on these methods).

His data analysis shows that prior to age 32 or so, each additional year of age at marriage reduces the odds of divorce by 11 percent. However, after that the odds of divorce increase by 5 percent per year. Wolfinger found the change in slopes to be statistically significant.

"This is a big change. To the best of my knowledge, it's only recently that 30-something [marriage](#) started to incur a higher divorce risk. It appears to be a trend that's gradually developed over the past 20 years: A study based on 2002 data observed that the divorce risk for people who married in their 30s was flattening out, rather than continuing to decline through that decade of life as it previously had," Wolfinger wrote in a blog post detailing his research. The post appeared in the Family Studies blog, a product of the Institute for Family Studies.

More information: The current study is available online: family-studies.org/want-to-avo...ed-but-not-too-long/

Provided by University of Utah

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