

# The frequency of misattributed paternity in Sweden

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The frequency of misattributed paternity, where the assumed father is not the biological father, is low and decreasing in Sweden, according to an analysis of 1.95 million family units with children born mainly between 1950 and 1990.

In the *Journal of Internal Medicine* analysis, the overall rate of misattributed [paternity](#) was 1.7%, with rates closer to 1% in more recent decades.

The authors note that beyond its general scientific and societal relevance, the frequency of misattributed paternity has implications for studies on hereditary conditions. The study's findings indicate that misattributed paternity is unlikely to have large effects on such studies.

"Using simple but elegant methods, together with large-scale register data, we present population-based estimates of a peculiar question. These findings should once and for all put an end to the common misconception of overinflated occurrences of misattributed paternity in the [general population](#)," said lead author Torsten Dahlén, of the Karolinska Institutet, in Sweden.

**More information:** Torsten Dahlén et al, The frequency of misattributed paternity in Sweden is low and decreasing: A nationwide cohort study, *Journal of Internal Medicine* (2021). [DOI: 10.1111/joim.13351](#)

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