



ECHO

Environmental influences
on Child Health Outcomes

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Study Summary

Developing a Shorter Survey for Measuring Sources of Stress in Adults

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Who sponsored this study?

This research was supported by the Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) program, the Office of the Director, and the National Institutes of Health.

Why was this study needed?

Stress can have a significant impact on the psychological, social, and physical health of individuals. But the questionnaires that are often used to understand stress exposure can be long and burdensome. This goal of this research was to create a shorter version of the Crisis in Family Systems-Revised (CRISYS-R) that still covers all relevant areas of stress.

Who was involved?

The study included 884 pregnant women from the PRogramming of Intergenerational Stress Mechanisms (PRISM) study, which recruited pregnant women from prenatal clinics in New York City and Boston beginning in 2011. One-third of these women were born outside of the US, and 20% spoke Spanish as a primary language. Around 20% of participating women had less than a high school education, and 60% reported having financial trouble.

What happened during the study?

Participants completed the CRISYS-R questionnaire through an in-person or phone interview in their preferred language. The researchers used statistical methods and expert feedback to identify which questions on the CRISYS-R provided the most insight into the participant's level of stress exposure.

What were the study results?

The researchers were able to reduce the 80-question CRISYS-R to just 24 essential questions, resulting in a short form CRISYS questionnaire (CRISYS-SF). The CRISYS-SF covers the same 11 areas of stress that are addressed in the CRISYS-R. Participants received very similar scores from both the CRISYS-R and CRISYS-SF.

Footnote: Results reported here are for a single study. Other or future studies may provide new information or different results. You should not make changes to your health without first consulting your healthcare professional.

Impact

In large-scale studies, lengthy questionnaires can contribute to lower response rates, leading to incomplete or low-quality data. The CRISYS-SF offers doctors and researchers a way to screen for participant stress, identifying the sources of that stress, and determining the most effective interventions.

What happens next?

Researchers can use the CRISYS-SF to investigate relationships between stressful life events and specific health outcomes.

Where can I learn more?

[Access the full journal article](#), titled “A short form of the Crisis in Family Systems (CRISYS) in a racially diverse sample of pregnant women,” in *Current Psychology*.

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