



Hyperglycaemia Recognised in Early Pregnancy is Phenotypically Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus not Gestational Diabetes Mellitus: A Case Control Study

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Complete List of Authors:	Agha-Jaffar, Rochan; Imperial College London, Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism Oliver, Nick; Imperial College London, Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism Kostoula, Melina; Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Godsland, Ian; Imperial College London, Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism Yu, Christina; Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Johnston, Desmond; Imperial College London, Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism Terry, Jayne; Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Gable, David; Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Robison, Stephen; Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
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Title Page

Full Title: Hyperglycaemia Recognised in Early Pregnancy is Phenotypically Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus not Gestational Diabetes Mellitus: A Case Control Study

Authors: R Agha-Jaffar¹, NS Oliver¹, M Kostoula², IF Godsland¹, C Yu³, J Terry³, D Johnston¹, D Gable² & S Robinson².

Affiliations: 1. Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism, Department of Medicine, Imperial College London. 2. Department of Metabolic Medicine, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust. 3. Department of Maternal Medicine, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust.

Corresponding author: Professor Stephen Robinson, Department of Metabolic Medicine, Mint Wing, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust, W2 1NY, United Kingdom. Telephone: +44 203 312 1253
Email: Stephen.Robinson15@nhs.net

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Abstract

Objective: Gestational diabetes mellitus is defined as “diabetes recognised in the second or third trimester that is not clearly overt diabetes”. ~~This definition reflects the risk of unrecognised Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM).~~ Evidence relating to women with hyperglycaemia early in pregnancy is limited. ~~and were adverse outcomes are demonstrated, maternal adiposity confounds the results.~~ We aimed to evaluate women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia early in pregnancy (eGDM) and compare them to those with pre-gestational established Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and gestational diabetes diagnosed routinely at 24-28 weeks gestation (rtGDM) to determine if length of exposure to hyperglycaemia adversely affected outcomes.

Methods: Forty consecutive women with eGDM who attended a multidisciplinary antenatal clinic were reviewed. Two separate BMI-matched control groups were identified: recognised pre-gestational T2DM (n=80) and rtGDM (n=80). Baseline demographics and outcomes were compared.

Results: ~~Significant variations in HbA1c at identification of hyperglycaemia existed.~~ A higher proportion of women in the eGDM and T2DM group required insulin and the incidence of hypertensive disorders was similarly increased compared with the rtGDM group (88.6%, 77.0% versus 8.1%, p<0.001 and 42.5%, 37.5% versus 12.5% p<0.001 respectively). ~~Variations existed in the~~The proportion of infants born small for gestational age varied (eGDM 11.1%, T2DM 13.0% and rtGDM 2.5%, p=0.049). Postpartum, 7.5% of eGDM women were diagnosed with T2DM versus 1.3% in the rtGDM group (p<0.001).

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3 **Conclusions:** These novel data demonstrate that length of exposure to glucose
4 adversely affects materno-fetal outcomes independent of maternal adiposity.
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11 **Key Words:** Gestational diabetes mellitus, Pregnancy, Maternal outcomes, Fetal
12 outcomes
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15 16 17 18 19 20 **1.0 Introduction** 21

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24 Gestational diabetes was traditionally defined as “hyperglycaemia first detected in
25 pregnancy” thereby encompassing a wide range of clinical phenotypes and aetiologies
26 (1). Concerns relating to the increasing incidence of obesity and the potential for
27 unrecognised Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2 DM) amongst women of childbearing
28 age prompted international authorities to revise the definition to “diabetes first
29 recognised in the second or third trimester that is not clearly overt diabetes” (2).
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31 Though the evidence was recognised to be of low grade, categorising women with
32 hyperglycaemia diagnostic of overt diabetes separately was suggested due to the
33 theoretical heightened risk of adverse materno-fetal outcomes in this sub-group.
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48 Narrowing the timeframe in which gestational diabetes is diagnosed relates to
49 glycaemic threshold revisions, which are based on findings from the Hyperglycaemia
50 and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes (HAPO) study. This observational study
51 demonstrated a continuum between glucose and the proportion of infants born large
52 for gestational age in 23,316 women who underwent 75g oral glucose tolerance tests
53 (OGTTs) at 24-28 weeks gestation (3). Pregnancy induced physiological increases in
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3 insulin resistance can expose a partial insulin secretory deficit in predisposed
4 individuals precipitating hyperglycaemia, the risk of which is greatest in the third
5 trimester (4). However, defective beta cell function is often evident prior to this (5).
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10 The optimal time to test for gestational diabetes is therefore unclear: sufficient time is
11 needed for the hyperglycaemia to develop while simultaneously allowing an adequate
12 treatment period for effective adverse outcome risk modification. In addition,
13 maternal glycaemia should be considered early in pregnancy to detect pre-existing
14 unrecognised Type 2 DM.
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24 We hypothesised that the length of exposure to glucose would adversely affect
25 materno-fetal outcomes and that women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia early in
26 pregnancy would phenotypically resemble those with Type 2 DM in terms of
27 outcomes, rather than those with gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine testing. To
28 investigate this hypothesis, we undertook a case control study to compare women
29 with hyperglycaemia detected prior to 20 weeks gestation to early pregnancy body
30 mass index (BMI) matched women with established, recognised pre-gestational Type
31 2 DM and to those with gestational diabetes on routine testing i.e. 24-28 weeks
32 gestation.
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47 **2.0 Materials and Methods**

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51 Pregnant women with hyperglycaemia detected prior to routine testing, who attended
52 an inner-city multidisciplinary antenatal clinic (2010-2015) were retrospectively
53 reviewed. Forty consecutive women were identified comprising the early
54 hyperglycaemia (eGDM) group. These women had been identified to be at risk of
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3 developing hyperglycaemia early either by nature of having had a previous pregnancy
4 complicated by gestational diabetes, or due to the incidental finding of glycosuria. All
5 women meeting the former criteria had been provided with a glucometer and standard
6 dietary advice at 16 weeks gestation, unless a random plasma glucose (RPG) and/ or
7 HbA1c was elevated, in which case intervention and subsequent multidisciplinary
8 follow up were expedited. The same intervention was provided for those with
9 glycosuria once hyperglycaemia was confirmed. Where dietary measures failed to
10 adequately achieve target capillary blood glucose (CBG) values (fasting CBG
11 <6.0mmol/L or 1 hour postprandial <8.0mmol/L) metformin and/or insulin, were
12 commenced as appropriate.
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29 Two separate control groups matched for early pregnancy BMI, were retrospectively
30 identified from the cohort attending the same multidisciplinary antenatal clinic. The
31 first group consisted of 80 consecutive pregnant women with a clinician-assigned
32 diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes mellitusDM established at least 3 months prior to
33 conception (T2DM group); the second comprised 80 women with gestational diabetes
34 diagnosed on routine testing over a one--year period (2014-2015: rtGDM group). In
35 accordance with the National Institute for Clinical Health and Excellence (NICE)
36 guidelines, all women at our centre are screened for gestational diabetes risk factors at
37 their initial antenatal assessment (6). The risk factors that defined the need for a
38 diagnostic 75g OGTT at 24-28 weeks gestation consisted of non white-European
39 ethnicity, an early pregnancy BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$, a previous pregnancy with macrosomia
40 ($\geq 4000\text{g}$) and a first degree relative with Type 2 diabetes mellitus. Modified 1999
41 WHO gestational diabetes diagnostic criteria were in use at the time of this study
42 (fasting plasma glucose threshold $\geq 6.1\text{mmol/L}$, 120 minute post 75g glucose load
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3 value ≥ 7.8 mmol/L) (7). Women who fulfilled criteria for overt diabetes either by 75g
4 OGTT or HbA1c, which was routinely measured on confirmation of hyperglycaemia,
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6 were excluded from this second control group.
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10 Prospectively collected maternal antenatal and delivery records were examined to
11 establish baseline maternal demographics including self reported ethnicity, obstetric
12 history, anthropometry and biochemical data. Hypertension at baseline was defined as
13 either a BP measuring $\geq 140/90$ mmHg or anti-hypertensive use. Maternal outcomes
14 evaluated included requirement for insulin during the antenatal period, delivery
15 modality and development of pregnancy related hypertensive disorders. The latter was
16 recorded as a composite outcome and a score of 1 applied if either of the following
17 developed: pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH) i.e. hypertension developing after
18 20 weeks gestation ($\geq 140/90$ mmHg or a rise in systolic BP >30 mmHg/ >15 - 20 mmHg
19 in diastolic BP) and/or pre-eclampsia (PET) defined as new hypertension presenting
20 after 20 weeks gestation with one or more of the following 1. significant proteinuria
21 (urine protein: creatinine ratio >30 mg/mmol), 2. evidence of systemic involvement
22 (renal/ hepatic/ neurological/ haematological) or 3. fetal growth restriction. The final
23 maternal outcome assessed was postpartum glycaemia: all women diagnosed with
24 hyperglycaemia in pregnancy were invited to a 6-week postpartum FPG assessment
25 with a 75g OGTT and HbA1c planned in those with impaired fasting glycaemia.
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49 Delivery and neonatal records were examined to establish fetal characteristics at birth
50 and neonatal complications. The GROW gestation network calculator was used to
51 determine customised birth weight centiles through adjusting birth weight for
52 maternal height, weight, ethnicity, parity, fetal gestational age and gender (8). Large
53 for gestational age (LGA) infants were defined as infants with an adjusted birth
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weight $\geq 90^{\text{th}}$ centile: small for gestational age (SGA) as those with a birth weight $< 10^{\text{th}}$ centile. Preterm delivery was defined as delivery prior to 37 weeks gestation. Neonatal complications were recorded as a composite outcome with a score of 1 applied if one or more of the following adverse events developed: shoulder dystocia, neonatal hypoglycaemia requiring treatment (defined as glucose $< 2.8 \text{ mmol/L}$ requiring either supplemental feeding or intravenous glucose), respiratory distress syndrome requiring oxygen therapy or continuous positive airway pressure for a minimum of four hours, admission to the neonatal intensive care unit (necessitated by preterm delivery < 34 weeks gestation, low birth weight or medical conditions requiring management), or hyperbilirubinaemia requiring phototherapy.

2.1 Statistical Analysis

Continuous data are expressed as mean (\pm SD) or median (interquartile range) depending on the distribution of the data: ANOVA or Kruskal-Wallis tests were used as appropriate to detect significant variation in continuous variables between the groups. Categorical data are expressed as proportions and variation between groups tested by Chi-squared tests, with Fisher exact tests used where the expected cell frequency was less than five. A p value < 0.05 was accepted as statistically significant. Where significant variation between groups was detected, hypothesis driven post-hoc between-group comparisons were undertaken using t-test, Mann-Whitney test or proportions test as appropriate. All analyses were performed with STATA v13.1 (StataCorp, Texas, USA).

3.0 Results

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3 Across the cohort, mean age was 33.9 (± 4.5) years and BMI 31.7 (± 5.3) kg/m²: 81%
4 were non-White with women of South Asian ethnicity forming the largest sub-group
5 (27.5%). Maternal baseline demographics are tabulated (Table 1). In addition to the
6 control groups being matched for age and early-pregnancy BMI, the proportion of
7 women of non-White ethnicity were similar.
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17 ~~There was significant variation in HbA1c at initial identification of hyperglycaemia~~
18 ~~between the groups (Table 1), with no difference in HbA1c (p=0.1) between the~~
19 ~~eGDM group and Type 2 DM controls on post hoc testing, and a significantly higher~~
20 ~~HbA1c in the eGDM compared with the rtGDM group (p<0.001).~~ Analysis by HbA1c
21 category demonstrated that 80.0% in the eGDM group and 18.7% in the rtGDM group
22 had an HbA1c $\geq 6.1\%$ (43mmol/mol). In the eGDM group, 37.5% had an HbA1c \geq
23 6.5% (48mmol/mol): by definition, no women in the rtGDM group had an HbA1c
24 diagnostic of Type 2 DM. In the T2DM group, 56.3% of women had an initial HbA1c
25 exceeding the national recommendation for pre-conception i.e. $\geq 6.5\%$ (48mmol/mol)
26 (6). On average, women with Type 2 DM had been diagnosed 3.0 (2.0-6.5) years
27 prior to pregnancy.
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45 ~~There was significant variation in parity status~~ Parity status varied in the three groups
46 (Table 1). In post hoc analysis, primigravida status was lower in the eGDM than the
47 rtGDM group (17.5% versus 37% respectively p=0.002) and multiparity status higher
48 (25.0% versus 4.0% p=0.001): parity status in parity status did not differ significantly
49 between the eGDM and T2DM groups was similar. ~~There was also significant~~
50 ~~variation between the groups in the proportion of women with a previous pregnancy~~
51 ~~complicated by gestational diabetes. No women in the rtGDM group had a previous~~
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pregnancy complicated by gestational diabetes, whereas in the eGDM group the proportion was 71.8% ($p < 0.001$). This was additionally higher than the 38.5% in the Type 2 DM group ($p < 0.001$). There was significant variation in the The proportion of women with essential hypertension at baseline varied, with a higher proportion in the eGDM compared with the rtGDM group ($p = 0.004$) but no difference between the eGDM versus the T2DM group ($p = 0.6$).

3.1 Maternal Outcomes

~~There were significant differences in both the~~ The proportion of women requiring insulin and those developing pregnancy-related hypertensive disorders differed (Table 2): post-hoc, ~~with, on post hoc~~ testing demonstrated, no ~~significant~~ differences in the proportions between the eGDM and T2DM groups ($p = 0.1$ and $p = 0.2$ respectively) and ~~significantly~~ higher proportions in the eGDM compared to the rtGDM group ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.001$ respectively). ~~Differences existed in delivery modality~~ Overall, delivery modality differed across the three groups (Table 2) though a sub-analysis demonstrated that emergency caesarean delivery rates were similar (22.5%, 27.5% and 21.3%, $p = 0.2$) (Table 2).

3.2 Fetal outcomes

In total, eight stillbirths were recorded in this cohort: 4 in the eGDM group, 3 in the T2DM group and 1 in the rtGDM group (10.0%, 3.8%, 1.3% stillbirth rate respectively, $p = 0.069$). Stillbirth data were excluded from the subsequent fetal outcome analyses. No congenital malformations or neonatal deaths were recorded in the remaining cohort.

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3 Median fetal birth weight and adjusted ~~and~~ birth weight centile were similar in the
4 three groups as were the proportion of neonates born large for gestational age (LGA)
5 and macrosomic (birth weight ≥ 4000 g) (Table 2). ~~No differences existed in the~~
6 ~~proportion of infants born either LGA or macrosomic (birth weight ≥ 4000 g).~~
7 ~~Significant variations existed in the~~ The proportion of infants born SGA ~~small for~~
8 gestational age (SGA) differed:- with post hoc analysis ~~demonstrated~~ demonstrating
9 at borderline significance, no significant difference in the proportion between the
10 eGDM and Type 2 DM group (p=0.7) but a higher proportion born SGA to ~~in~~ the
11 eGDM compared with to the rtGDM group at borderline significance (p=0.05). ~~There~~
12 ~~was significant variation in the proportion~~ Preterm delivery rates also varied ~~of~~
13 ~~neonates born preterm,~~ with women with eGDM significantly more likely to deliver
14 prior to 37 weeks gestation than those with rtGDM on post hoc analysis: there was no
15 ~~significant~~ difference in the preterm delivery rate between the eGDM and T2DM
16 groups (p=0.2). ~~No significant difference existed in neonatal~~ Neonatal complication
17 rates were similar in the three groups (11.1%, 13.0% and 11.4%, p=0.9).

3.3 Postpartum Glucose Assessments

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42 Postpartum glucose assessments were offered to all women diagnosed with
43 hyperglycaemia in pregnancy: 18 women with eGDM (45.0%) and 57 women with
44 rtGDM (71.3%) attended. Median (IQR) FPG was higher in the latter group: 5.7 (4.9-
45 6.8) mmol/L versus 5.0 (4.6-5.3) mmol/L, p=0.02. Individuals with an impaired FPG
46 had a subsequent 75g OGTT. Overall, a higher proportion of women in the eGDM
47 group were diagnosed with either impaired glucose tolerance or Type 2 DM within a
48 3 month period: 20.0% versus 1.3% and 7.5% versus 1.3% respectively, p<0.001.
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4.0 Conclusions

These data suggest that women with hyperglycaemia detected early in pregnancy resemble women with established Type 2 DM ~~in terms of maternal outcomes~~, with a similar proportion of women requiring insulin and developing hypertensive disorders compared to those diagnosed with gestational diabetes on routine testing. Furthermore, risk of glucose intolerance persisting postpartum was heightened in women with early hyperglycaemia. ~~In terms of fetal outcomes, a~~ similar proportion of neonates were born preterm in women with early hyperglycaemia and Type 2 DM: ~~the rate in the former group was significantly higher than among~~ women with routinely diagnosed gestational diabetes had lower preterm delivery rates. In addition, rtGDM women had Variations in stillbirth rate and proportion of infants born small for gestational age were also observed, with women with routinely diagnosed gestational diabetes having the lowest rates the lowest stillbirth rate and lowest proportion of infants born small for gestational age.

These data add to those described by a retrospective study conducted in Australia (9). In this study, data from 4873 women attending an antenatal centre over a ten-year period were examined and women were categorised into one of 4 groups: pre-existing diabetes, hyperglycaemia detected at <12 weeks gestation, hyperglycaemia detected at 12-23 weeks and hyperglycaemia diagnosed ≥ 24 weeks gestation. Requirement for insulin therapy, hypertensive disorders, preterm delivery, and caesarean sections were all more prevalent in women with pre-existing diabetes and early gestational diabetes. Maternal age and obesity are independent risk factors for adverse materno-fetal outcomes including macrosomia and pregnancy-related hypertensive disorders (10,

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3 11). Significant variations existed in the mean age and pre-pregnancy BMI across the
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5 four groups in the Australian study. In contrast, maternal age and BMI were matched
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7 across the groups in our study, removing the potential for confounding and clearly
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9 suggesting that the spectrum of gestational diabetes to Type 2 DM is defined not only
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11 by the degree of glycaemia as illustrated by the HAPO study, but also by the length of
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13 exposure to hyperglycaemia (3).
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19 In contrast to the Australian study, no significant variations existed in the proportion
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21 of infants born macrosomic ($\geq 4000\text{g}$) in our study. However, variations existed in the
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23 proportion of infants born small for gestational age. Our study was not designed to
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25 demonstrate the cause of small for gestational age neonates. This observational
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27 finding could relate to placental insufficiency associated with the increased incidence
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29 of hypertensive disorders observed in these groups. The non-significant increase in
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31 stillbirth rate observed in women with eGDM is also an important finding. Both Type
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33 1 and Type 2 DM are associated with an increased risk of congenital malformations
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35 mediated by the teratogenic effects of hyperglycaemia together with the oxidative
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37 stress observed during the period of organogenesis (12). The higher stillbirth rate
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39 demonstrated in the eGDM group could indeed indicate developmental malformations
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41 secondary to early pregnancy hyperglycaemia and similar pathophysiological
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43 features.
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51 Our study has further limitations. The diagnosis of Type 2 DM was clinician assigned.
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53 In addition, there were no antibody results available for women in the eGDM group.
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55 There are data demonstrating that ethnicity is an independent risk factor for adverse
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57 materno-fetal outcomes (13). Though the proportion of women of non-White ethnicity
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3 was similar in the three groups, residual confounding on sub-ethnicity classifications
4 may have existed. Decisions to intensify treatment were generally based on home
5 capillary blood glucose values rendering it difficult to compare the effectiveness of
6 glycaemic control strategies across the groups. Finally, postpartum glucose
7 assessments were dependent on subsequent clinic attendance. This was incomplete
8 with 37.5% of women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia in pregnancy failing to attend.
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10 Though 72.5% of the women who attended in the eGDM group had normoglycaemia
11 postpartum, the length of follow-up may have been insufficient particularly when
12 considering evidence suggesting the delay in progression to Type 2 DM associated
13 with breastfeeding (14).
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Ours was an exploratory, observational study examining whether there might be an
issue relating to the length of exposure to hyperglycaemia independent of variation in
adiposity. Future work should focus on viable screening strategies for high-risk
women. In our study, the majority of women were screened for hyperglycaemia early
in pregnancy due to a history of previous gestational diabetes (71.8%). Differences in
parity status were also found with women with early hyperglycaemia being less likely
to be in their first pregnancy and more likely to be multiparous. Data from the
Australian study indicate that a higher incidence of a family history of Type 2 DM is
found in women with early hyperglycaemia compared to those with GDM diagnosed
 ≥ 24 weeks gestation.
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The most appropriate diagnostic criteria to diagnose hyperglycaemia in early
pregnancy are the subject of considerable debate. In our study significant variations
existed in HbA1c at initial diagnosis. However, twenty per cent of individuals in the

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3 eGDM group had an HbA1c that would be considered normal in a non-pregnant
4 population implicating its limitations as a diagnostic tool. The increased red cell turn
5 over observed in pregnancy together with ethnicity based variations renders it difficult
6 to clearly define an appropriate HbA1c threshold (15, 16). One prospective study
7 conducted in New Zealand demonstrated that women with an HbA1c above
8 41mmol/mol (5.9%) had a positive predictive value of developing gestational diabetes
9 prior to 20 weeks gestation of 52.9%. In women with an HbA1c that exceeded this
10 threshold, relative risk of major congenital anomalies, preeclampsia, shoulder
11 dystocia and perinatal death were all increased (17). Ethnicity-based variations in
12 HbA1c were addressed in a subsequent prospective cohort study conducted in
13 Barcelona, which demonstrated that an HbA1c exceeding 41mmol/mol (5.9%) was
14 associated with a significantly increased risk of macrosomia and development of pre-
15 eclampsia in a multi-ethnic cohort following adjustment for confounding factors (18).
16 In relation to the most appropriate diagnostic glucose threshold, international
17 authorities including IADPSG and ADA recommend an FPG ≥ 5.1 mmol/L for
18 diagnosis even in the early stages of pregnancy (1, 19). Prospective cohort studies
19 conducted in China and Italy suggest that this value is poorly predictive, instead
20 demonstrating a substantial fall in glucose in early pregnancy, even in those that later
21 develop glucose intolerance (20, 21). Given that reductions in insulin sensitivity are
22 observed in high-risk groups prior to the onset of hyperglycaemia, suitable methods
23 and thresholds to diagnose this could also be explored (5).

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54 Despite early intervention and management, women with early hyperglycaemia had
55 an increased risk of adverse outcomes compared to those diagnosed routinely at 24-28
56 weeks gestation. Addressing factors other than glycaemia could mitigate this. The
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3 benefit of aspirin as a means of preventing or delaying pre-eclampsia or of folic acid
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5 in reducing congenital malformation risk could be explored. The need for early
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7 delivery in the same way that delivery of neonates prior to 39 weeks gestation is
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9 recommended for women with pre-gestational diabetes to avoid the risk of still birth
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11 could also be considered (6).
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17 This study has shown that women with hyperglycaemia detected early in pregnancy
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19 represent a separate clinical entity to those diagnosed with hyperglycaemia on routine
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21 diagnostic testing, implicating the importance of length of exposure to
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23 hyperglycaemia independent of maternal adiposity. Indeed, an overlap has been
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25 demonstrated between women with early hyperglycaemia and those with established
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27 and recognised Type 2 DM in terms of materno-fetal outcomes signifying the
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29 importance of screening in high-risk population groups. Practical considerations in
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31 this group include effective screening strategies, early identification and prevention of
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33 risk.
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17 **5.2 Author Contributions:**

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19 R.A.J. analysed the data and wrote the manuscript. N.O. contributed to the analysis
20 and reviewed/ edited the manuscript. M.K. collected the data. I.F.G. analysed the data
21 and reviewed/ edited the manuscript. C.Y., J.T. and D.G. contributed to the discussion
22 of the analysis and reviewed the manuscript. D.J. contributed to the analysis and
23 reviewed the manuscript. S.R. contributed to analysis and wrote/ revised the
24 manuscript. S.R. is the guarantor of this work and, as such, takes responsibility for the
25 integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.
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Professor Stephen Robinson, Department of Metabolic Medicine, Min Wing, St
Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust, W2 1NY, United Kingdom.
Telephone: +44 203 312 1253 Email: Stephen.Robinson@imperial.nhs.uk

For Peer Review Only

Table 1: Maternal baseline demographics and biochemical data in women with hyperglycaemia diagnosed prior to 20 weeks gestation, women with recognised pre-gestational type 2 diabetes and women with gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine testing

	eGDM (n=40)	T2DM (n=80)	rtGDM (n=80)	Significance
Mean (SD) Age (years)	33.9 (±4.5)	34.2 (±5.1)	33.7 (±5.5)	0.35
Mean (SD) Height (cm)	161.7 (±7.3)	161.5 (±7.2)	160.8 (±6.0)	0.79
Mean (SD) Weight (kg)	83.6 (±15.8)	84.1 (±19.2)	78.8 (±12.5)	0.14
Median (IQR) BMI (kg/m ²)	32.0 (27.0-35.0)	31.0 (28.0-35.9)	30.4 (27.9-33.9)	0.50
Non-White ethnicity % (n)	80.0 (32)	86.2 (69)	76.3 (61)	0.27
Black African-Caribbean	25.0 (10)	26.2 (21)	22.5 (18)	
Arab/ North African	20.0 (8)	15.0 (12)	7.5 (6)	
South Asian	25.0 (10)	37.5 (30)	18.8 (15)	
Other	10.0 (4)	7.5 (6)	27.5 (22)	
Parity				
Primigravida % (n)	17.5 (7)	18 (22.5)	37 (46.3)	<0.001
Multiparous % (n) ^a	25.0 (10)	11 (13.8)	4 (5.0)	
History previous pregnancy complicated by GDM % (n)	71.8 (28)	38.5 (30)	0.0 (0)	<0.001
Diagnosis Hypertension % (n) ^b	20.0 (8)	23.4 (18)	3.8 (3)	0.001
Median (IQR) HbA1c (%)	6.4 (6.1-7.3)	6.8 (6.1-7.8)	5.6 (5.3-5.8)	<0.001
Median (IQR) HbA1c (mmol/mol)	46 (43-56)	51 (43-62)	38 (34-40)	<0.001

Footnotes:

eGDM Hyperglycaemia identified prior to 20 weeks gestation; **T2DM** Type 2 diabetes; **rtGDM** Gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine testing (24-28 weeks gestation); **IQR** Interquartile range; **BMI** Body mass index (measured at initial antenatal visit); **GDM** Gestational diabetes.

a. Defined as four or more deliveries after 24 weeks gestation

b. On anti-hypertensive medications and/ or blood pressure measured $\geq 140/90$ mmHg at initial antenatal visit.

Table 2: Maternofetal outcomes in women with hyperglycaemia diagnosed prior to 20 weeks gestation, women with recognised pre-gestational type 2 diabetes and women with gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine testing

	eGDM (n=40)	T2DM (n=80)	rtGDM (n=80)	Significance
Proportion requiring insulin treatment % (n)	88.6 (31)	77.0 (57)	8.1 (6)	<0.001
Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy % (n) ^a	42.5 (17)	37.5 (26)	12.5 (5)	<0.001
Delivery modality % (n)				
SVD	27.5 (11)	31.3 (25)	46.3 (37)	0.01
AVD	12.5 (5)	5.0 (4)	16.3 (13)	
Elective Caesarean Section	37.5 (15)	36.3 (28)	16.3 (13)	
Emergency Caesarean Section	22.5 (9)	27.5 (22)	21.3 (17)	
Postpartum Haemorrhage				
Moderate (500-1000ml) % (n)	35.9 (14)	32.5 (26)	31.3 (25)	0.98
Severe (\geq 1000ml) % (n)	10.3 (4)	8.8 (7)	8.8 (7)	
Stillbirth % (n)	10.0 (4)	3.8 (3)	1.3 (1)	0.07
Median (IQR) fetal birthweight (g)	3350 (2820-3840)	3225 (2855-3735)	3370 (3090-3670)	0.34
Median (IQR) birthweight centile ^b	63.6 (26.0-98.1)	61 (26.0-91.4)	50 (29.0-76.7)	0.50
Infants born LGA % (n)	30.6 (11)	27.3 (21)	17.7 (14)	0.22
Infants born macrosomic (\geq 4000g) % (n)	19.4 (7)	15.6 (12)	11.4 (9)	0.50
Infants born SGA % (n)	11.1 (4)	13.0 (10)	2.5 (2)	0.05
Preterm delivery (<37 weeks gestation) % (n)	30.0 (12)	20.0 (16)	3.8 (2)	<0.001
Neonatal complications % (n) ^c	11.1 (4)	13.0 (10)	11.4 (9)	0.94
Median (IQR) postpartum fasting glucose (mmol/L)	5.7 (4.9-6.8)	NA	5.0 (4.6-5.3)	0.03

Footnotes:

eGDM Hyperglycaemia detected prior to 20 weeks gestation, **T2DM** Type 2 diabetes mellitus, **rtGDM** Gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine diagnostic testing (24-28 weeks gestation), **SVD** Spontaneous vertex delivery, **AVD** Assisted vaginal delivery, **LGA** Large for gestational age (adjusted birth weight \geq 90th centile), **SGA** Small for gestational age (adjusted birth weight <10th centile).

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3 a. Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy recorded as a composite outcome if one of more of the
4 following developed: a. Pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH: development of blood pressure $\geq 140/80$
5 or increase in systolic blood pressure by 20mmHg from 20 weeks gestation) b. Pre-eclampsia (PET:
6 defined as development proteinuria and hypertension).
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10 b. Fetal birth weight centile is equal to fetal birth weight adjusted for maternal height, weight,
11 ethnicity, fetal gender and gestational age at delivery.
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13 c. Composite outcome with score of 1 applied if one of the following occurred: shoulder dystocia,
14 neonatal hypoglycaemia requiring treatment, neonatal hyperbilirubinaemia requiring phototherapy,
15 respiratory distress requiring either oxygen or continuous positive airway pressure and requirement for
16 neonatal intensive care.
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Title Page

Full Title: Hyperglycaemia Recognised in Early Pregnancy is Phenotypically Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus not Gestational Diabetes Mellitus: A Case Control Study

Authors: R Agha-Jaffar¹, NS Oliver¹, M Kostoula², IF Godsland¹, C Yu³, J Terry³, D Johnston¹, D Gable² & S Robinson².

Affiliations: 1. Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism, Department of Medicine, Imperial College London. 2. Department of Metabolic Medicine, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust. 3. Department of Maternal Medicine, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust.

Corresponding author: Professor Stephen Robinson, Department of Metabolic Medicine, Mint Wing, St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust, W2 1NY, United Kingdom. Telephone: +44 203 312 1253
Email: Stephen.Robinson15@nhs.net

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Abstract

Objective: Gestational diabetes mellitus is defined as “diabetes recognised in the second or third trimester that is not clearly overt diabetes”. Evidence relating to women with hyperglycaemia early in pregnancy is limited. We aimed to evaluate women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia early in pregnancy (eGDM) and compare them to those with pre-gestational established Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and gestational diabetes diagnosed routinely at 24-28 weeks gestation (rtGDM) to determine if length of exposure to hyperglycaemia adversely affected outcomes.

Methods: Forty consecutive women with eGDM who attended a multidisciplinary antenatal clinic were reviewed. Two separate BMI-matched control groups were identified: recognised pre-gestational T2DM (n=80) and rtGDM (n=80). Baseline demographics and outcomes were compared.

Results: A higher proportion of women in the eGDM and T2DM group required insulin and the incidence of hypertensive disorders was similarly increased compared with the rtGDM group (88.6%, 77.0% versus 8.1%, $p<0.001$ and 42.5%, 37.5% versus 12.5% $p<0.001$ respectively). The proportion of infants born small for gestational age varied (eGDM 11.1%, T2DM 13.0% and rtGDM 2.5%, $p=0.049$). Postpartum, 7.5% of eGDM women were diagnosed with T2DM versus 1.3% in the rtGDM group ($p<0.001$).

Conclusions: These novel data demonstrate that length of exposure to glucose adversely affects materno-fetal outcomes independent of maternal adiposity.

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3 **Key Words:** Gestational diabetes mellitus, Pregnancy, Maternal outcomes, Fetal
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5 outcomes
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11 **1.0 Introduction**

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16 Gestational diabetes was traditionally defined as “hyperglycaemia first detected in
17 pregnancy” thereby encompassing a wide range of clinical phenotypes and aetiologies
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19 (1). Concerns relating to the increasing incidence of obesity and the potential for
20
21 unrecognised Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2 DM) amongst women of childbearing
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23 age prompted international authorities to revise the definition to “diabetes first
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25 recognised in the second or third trimester that is not clearly overt diabetes” (2).
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27 Though the evidence was recognised to be of low grade, categorising women with
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29 hyperglycaemia diagnostic of overt diabetes separately was suggested due to the
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31 theoretical heightened risk of adverse materno-fetal outcomes in this sub-group.
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40 Narrowing the timeframe in which gestational diabetes is diagnosed relates to
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42 glycaemic threshold revisions, which are based on findings from the Hyperglycaemia
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44 and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes (HAPO) study. This observational study
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46 demonstrated a continuum between glucose and the proportion of infants born large
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48 for gestational age in 23,316 women who underwent 75g oral glucose tolerance tests
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50 (OGTTs) at 24-28 weeks gestation (3). Pregnancy induced physiological increases in
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52 insulin resistance can expose a partial insulin secretory deficit in predisposed
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54 individuals precipitating hyperglycaemia, the risk of which is greatest in the third
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56 trimester (4). However, defective beta cell function is often evident prior to this (5).
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3 The optimal time to test for gestational diabetes is therefore unclear: sufficient time is
4 needed for the hyperglycaemia to develop while simultaneously allowing an adequate
5 treatment period for effective adverse outcome risk modification. In addition,
6 maternal glycaemia should be considered early in pregnancy to detect pre-existing
7 unrecognised Type 2 DM.
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17 We hypothesised that the length of exposure to glucose would adversely affect
18 materno-fetal outcomes and that women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia early in
19 pregnancy would phenotypically resemble those with Type 2 DM in terms of
20 outcomes, rather than those with gestational diabetes diagnosed on routine testing. To
21 investigate this hypothesis, we undertook a case control study to compare women
22 with hyperglycaemia detected prior to 20 weeks gestation to early pregnancy body
23 mass index (BMI) matched women with established, recognised pre-gestational Type
24 2 DM and to those with gestational diabetes on routine testing i.e. 24-28 weeks
25 gestation.
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40 **2.0 Materials and Methods**

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44 Pregnant women with hyperglycaemia detected prior to routine testing, who attended
45 an inner-city multidisciplinary antenatal clinic (2010-2015) were retrospectively
46 reviewed. Forty consecutive women were identified comprising the early
47 hyperglycaemia (eGDM) group. These women had been identified to be at risk of
48 developing hyperglycaemia early either by nature of having had a previous pregnancy
49 complicated by gestational diabetes, or due to the incidental finding of glycosuria. All
50 women meeting the former criteria had been provided with a glucometer and standard
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3 dietary advice at 16 weeks gestation, unless a random plasma glucose (RPG) and/ or
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5 HbA1c was elevated, in which case intervention and subsequent multidisciplinary
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7 follow up were expedited. The same intervention was provided for those with
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9 glycosuria once hyperglycaemia was confirmed. Where dietary measures failed to
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11 adequately achieve target capillary blood glucose (CBG) values (fasting CBG
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13 <6.0mmol/L or 1 hour postprandial <8.0mmol/L) metformin and/or insulin, were
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15 commenced as appropriate.
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22 Two separate control groups matched for early pregnancy BMI, were retrospectively
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24 identified from the cohort attending the same multidisciplinary antenatal clinic. The
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26 first group consisted of 80 consecutive pregnant women with a clinician-assigned
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28 diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes mellitus established at least 3 months prior to conception
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30 (T2DM group); the second comprised 80 women with gestational diabetes diagnosed
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32 on routine testing over a one-year period (2014-2015: rtGDM group). In accordance
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34 with the National Institute for Clinical Health and Excellence (NICE) guidelines, all
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36 women at our centre are screened for gestational diabetes risk factors at their initial
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38 antenatal assessment (6). The risk factors that defined the need for a diagnostic 75g
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40 OGTT at 24-28 weeks gestation consisted of non white-European ethnicity, an early
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42 pregnancy BMI $\geq 30\text{kg/m}^2$, a previous pregnancy with macrosomia ($\geq 4000\text{g}$) and a
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44 first degree relative with Type 2 diabetes mellitus. Modified 1999 WHO gestational
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46 diabetes diagnostic criteria were in use at the time of this study (fasting plasma
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48 glucose threshold $\geq 6.1\text{mmol/L}$, 120 minute post 75g glucose load value $\geq 7.8\text{mmol/L}$)
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50 (7). Women who fulfilled criteria for overt diabetes either by 75g OGTT or HbA1c,
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52 which was routinely measured on confirmation of hyperglycaemia, were excluded
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54 from this second control group.
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3 Prospectively collected maternal antenatal and delivery records were examined to
4 establish baseline maternal demographics including self reported ethnicity, obstetric
5 history, anthropometry and biochemical data. Hypertension at baseline was defined as
6 either a BP measuring $\geq 140/90$ mmHg or anti-hypertensive use. Maternal outcomes
7 evaluated included requirement for insulin during the antenatal period, delivery
8 modality and development of pregnancy related hypertensive disorders. The latter was
9 recorded as a composite outcome and a score of 1 applied if either of the following
10 developed: pregnancy induced hypertension (PIH) i.e. hypertension developing after
11 20 weeks gestation ($\geq 140/90$ mmHg or a rise in systolic BP >30 mmHg/ >15 - 20 mmHg
12 in diastolic BP) and/or pre-eclampsia (PET) defined as new hypertension presenting
13 after 20 weeks gestation with one or more of the following 1. significant proteinuria
14 (urine protein: creatinine ratio >30 mg/mmol), 2. evidence of systemic involvement
15 (renal/ hepatic/ neurological/ haematological) or 3. fetal growth restriction. The final
16 maternal outcome assessed was postpartum glycaemia: all women diagnosed with
17 hyperglycaemia in pregnancy were invited to a 6-week postpartum FPG assessment
18 with a 75g OGTT and HbA1c planned in those with impaired fasting glycaemia.
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42 Delivery and neonatal records were examined to establish fetal characteristics at birth
43 and neonatal complications. The GROW gestation network calculator was used to
44 determine customised birth weight centiles through adjusting birth weight for
45 maternal height, weight, ethnicity, parity, fetal gestational age and gender (8). Large
46 for gestational age (LGA) infants were defined as infants with an adjusted birth
47 weight $>90^{\text{th}}$ centile: small for gestational age (SGA) as those with a birth weight
48 $<10^{\text{th}}$ centile. Preterm delivery was defined as delivery prior to 37 weeks gestation.
49 Neonatal complications were recorded as a composite outcome with a score of 1
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3 applied if one or more of the following adverse events developed: shoulder dystocia,
4 neonatal hypoglycaemia requiring treatment (defined as glucose $<2.8\text{mmol/L}$
5 requiring either supplemental feeding or intravenous glucose), respiratory distress
6 syndrome requiring oxygen therapy or continuous positive airway pressure for a
7 minimum of four hours, admission to the neonatal intensive care unit (necessitated by
8 preterm delivery <34 weeks gestation, low birth weight or medical conditions requiring
9 management), or hyperbilirubinaemia requiring phototherapy.
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21 *2.1 Statistical Analysis*

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23 Continuous data are expressed as mean ($\pm\text{SD}$) or median (interquartile range)
24 depending on the distribution of the data: ANOVA or Kruskal-Wallis tests were used
25 as appropriate to detect significant variation in continuous variables between the
26 groups. Categorical data are expressed as proportions and variation between groups
27 tested by Chi-squared tests, with Fisher exact tests used where the expected cell
28 frequency was less than five. A p value <0.05 was accepted as statistically significant.
29 Where significant variation between groups was detected, hypothesis driven post-hoc
30 between-group comparisons were undertaken using t-test, Mann-Whitney test or
31 proportions test as appropriate. All analyses were performed with STATA v13.1
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49 **3.0 Results**

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53 Across the cohort, mean age was $33.9 (\pm 4.5)$ years and BMI $31.7 (\pm 5.3)$ kg/m^2 : 81%
54 were non-White with women of South Asian ethnicity forming the largest sub-group
55 (27.5%). Maternal baseline demographics are tabulated (Table 1). In addition to the
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3 control groups being matched for age and early-pregnancy BMI, the proportion of
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5 women of non-White ethnicity were similar.
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10 Analysis by HbA1c category demonstrated that 80.0% in the eGDM group and 18.7%
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12 in the rtGDM group had an HbA1c \geq 6.1% (43mmol/mol). In the eGDM group,
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14 37.5% had an HbA1c \geq 6.5% (48mmol/mol): by definition, no women in the rtGDM
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16 group had an HbA1c diagnostic of Type 2 DM. In the T2DM group, 56.3% of women
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18 had an initial HbA1c exceeding the national recommendation for pre-conception i.e. \geq
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20 6.5% (48mmol/mol) (6). On average, women with Type 2 DM had been diagnosed
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22 3.0 (2.0-6.5) years prior to pregnancy.
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28 Parity status varied in the three groups (Table 1). In post hoc analysis, primigravida
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30 status was lower in the eGDM than the rtGDM group (17.5% versus 37% respectively
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32 $p=0.002$) and multiparity status higher (25.0% versus 4.0% $p=0.001$): parity status in
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34 the eGDM and T2DM groups was similar. The proportion of women with essential
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36 hypertension at baseline varied, with a higher proportion in the eGDM compared with
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38 the rtGDM group ($p=0.004$) but no difference between the eGDM versus the T2DM
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40 group ($p=0.6$).
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47 *3.1 Maternal Outcomes*

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49 The proportion of women requiring insulin and those developing pregnancy-related
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51 hypertensive disorders differed (Table 2): post-hoc testing demonstrated no
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53 differences in the proportions between the eGDM and T2DM groups ($p=0.1$ and
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55 $p=0.2$ respectively) and higher proportions in the eGDM compared to the rtGDM
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57 group ($p<0.001$ and $p<0.001$ respectively). Overall, delivery modality differed across
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3 the three groups though a sub-analysis demonstrated that emergency caesarean
4 delivery rates were similar (22.5%, 27.5% and 21.3%, $p=0.2$) (Table 2).
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10 *3.2 Fetal outcomes*

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12 In total, eight stillbirths were recorded in this cohort: 4 in the eGDM group, 3 in the
13 T2DM group and 1 in the rtGDM group (10.0%, 3.8%, 1.3% stillbirth rate
14 respectively, $p=0.069$). Stillbirth data were excluded from the subsequent fetal
15 outcome analyses. No congenital malformations or neonatal deaths were recorded in
16 the remaining cohort.
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26 Median fetal birth weight and adjusted birth weight centile were similar in the three
27 groups as were the proportion of neonates born large for gestational age (LGA) and
28 macrosomic (birth weight $\geq 4000\text{g}$) (Table 2). The proportion born small for
29 gestational age (SGA) differed with post hoc analysis demonstrating, at borderline
30 significance, a higher proportion born SGA to the eGDM compared to the rtGDM
31 group ($p=0.05$). Preterm delivery rates also varied with women with eGDM more
32 likely to deliver prior to 37 weeks gestation than those with rtGDM on post hoc
33 analysis: there was no difference in the preterm delivery rate between the eGDM and
34 T2DM groups ($p=0.2$). Neonatal complication rates were similar in the three groups
35 (11.1%, 13.0% and 11.4%, $p=0.9$).
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51 *3.3 Postpartum Glucose Assessments*

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53 Postpartum glucose assessments were offered to all women diagnosed with
54 hyperglycaemia in pregnancy: 18 women with eGDM (45.0%) and 57 women with
55 rtGDM (71.3%) attended. Median (IQR) FPG was higher in the latter group: 5.7 (4.9-
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3 6.8) mmol/L versus 5.0 (4.6-5.3) mmol/L, $p=0.02$. Individuals with an impaired FPG
4 had a subsequent 75g OGTT. Overall, a higher proportion of women in the eGDM
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6 group were diagnosed with either impaired glucose tolerance or Type 2 DM within a
7
8 3 month period: 20.0% versus 1.3% and 7.5% versus 1.3% respectively, $p<0.001$.
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14 **4.0 Conclusions**

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19 These data suggest that women with hyperglycaemia detected early in pregnancy
20 resemble women with established Type 2 DM, with a similar proportion of women
21 requiring insulin and developing hypertensive disorders compared to those diagnosed
22 with gestational diabetes on routine testing. Furthermore, risk of glucose intolerance
23 persisting postpartum was heightened in women with early hyperglycaemia. A similar
24 proportion of neonates were born preterm in women with early hyperglycaemia and
25 Type 2 DM: women with routinely diagnosed gestational diabetes had lower preterm
26 delivery rates. In addition, rtGDM women had the lowest stillbirth rate and lowest
27 proportion of infants born small for gestational age.
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42 These data add to those described by a retrospective study conducted in Australia (9).
43 In this study, data from 4873 women attending an antenatal centre over a ten-year
44 period were examined and women were categorised into one of 4 groups: pre-existing
45 diabetes, hyperglycaemia detected at <12 weeks gestation, hyperglycaemia detected at
46 12-23 weeks and hyperglycaemia diagnosed ≥ 24 weeks gestation. Requirement for
47 insulin therapy, hypertensive disorders, preterm delivery, and caesarean sections were
48 all more prevalent in women with pre-existing diabetes and early gestational diabetes.
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60 Maternal age and obesity are independent risk factors for adverse materno-fetal

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3 outcomes including macrosomia and pregnancy-related hypertensive disorders (10,
4 11). Significant variations existed in the mean age and pre-pregnancy BMI across the
5 four groups in the Australian study. In contrast, maternal age and BMI were matched
6 across the groups in our study, removing the potential for confounding and clearly
7 suggesting that the spectrum of gestational diabetes to Type 2 DM is defined not only
8 by the degree of glycaemia as illustrated by the HAPO study, but also by the length of
9 exposure to hyperglycaemia (3).

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21 In contrast to the Australian study, no significant variations existed in the proportion
22 of infants born macrosomic ($\geq 4000\text{g}$) in our study. However, variations existed in the
23 proportion of infants born small for gestational age. Our study was not designed to
24 demonstrate the cause of small for gestational age neonates. This observational
25 finding could relate to placental insufficiency associated with the increased incidence
26 of hypertensive disorders observed in these groups. The non-significant increase in
27 stillbirth rate observed in women with eGDM is also an important finding. Both Type
28 1 and Type 2 DM are associated with an increased risk of congenital malformations
29 mediated by the teratogenic effects of hyperglycaemia together with the oxidative
30 stress observed during the period of organogenesis (12). The higher stillbirth rate
31 demonstrated in the eGDM group could indeed indicate developmental malformations
32 secondary to early pregnancy hyperglycaemia and similar pathophysiological
33 features.
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54 Our study has further limitations. The diagnosis of Type 2 DM was clinician assigned.
55 In addition, there were no antibody results available for women in the eGDM group.
56 There are data demonstrating that ethnicity is an independent risk factor for adverse
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3 materno-fetal outcomes (13). Though the proportion of women of non-White ethnicity
4 was similar in the three groups, residual confounding on sub-ethnicity classifications
5 may have existed. Decisions to intensify treatment were generally based on home
6 capillary blood glucose values rendering it difficult to compare the effectiveness of
7 glycaemic control strategies across the groups. Finally, postpartum glucose
8 assessments were dependent on subsequent clinic attendance. This was incomplete
9 with 37.5% of women diagnosed with hyperglycaemia in pregnancy failing to attend.
10 Though 72.5% of the women who attended in the eGDM group had normoglycaemia
11 postpartum, the length of follow-up may have been insufficient particularly when
12 considering evidence suggesting the delay in progression to Type 2 DM associated
13 with breastfeeding (14).
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31 Ours was an exploratory, observational study examining whether there might be an
32 issue relating to the length of exposure to hyperglycaemia independent of variation in
33 adiposity. Future work should focus on viable screening strategies for high-risk
34 women. In our study, the majority of women were screened for hyperglycaemia early
35 in pregnancy due to a history of previous gestational diabetes (71.8%). Differences in
36 parity status were also found with women with early hyperglycaemia being less likely
37 to be in their first pregnancy and more likely to be multiparous. Data from the
38 Australian study indicate that a higher incidence of a family history of Type 2 DM is
39 found in women with early hyperglycaemia compared to those with GDM diagnosed
40 ≥ 24 weeks gestation.
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56 The most appropriate diagnostic criteria to diagnose hyperglycaemia in early
57 pregnancy are the subject of considerable debate. In our study significant variations
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3 existed in HbA1c at initial diagnosis. However, twenty per cent of individuals in the
4
5 eGDM group had an HbA1c that would be considered normal in a non-pregnant
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7 population implicating its limitations as a diagnostic tool. The increased red cell turn
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9 over observed in pregnancy together with ethnicity based variations renders it difficult
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11 to clearly define an appropriate HbA1c threshold (15, 16). One prospective study
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13 conducted in New Zealand demonstrated that women with an HbA1c above
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15 41mmol/mol (5.9%) had a positive predictive value of developing gestational diabetes
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17 prior to 20 weeks gestation of 52.9%. In women with an HbA1c that exceeded this
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19 threshold, relative risk of major congenital anomalies, preeclampsia, shoulder
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21 dystocia and perinatal death were all increased (17). Ethnicity-based variations in
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23 HbA1c were addressed in a subsequent prospective cohort study conducted in
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25 Barcelona, which demonstrated that an HbA1c exceeding 41mmol/mol (5.9%) was
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27 associated with a significantly increased risk of macrosomia and development of pre-
28
29 eclampsia in a multi-ethnic cohort following adjustment for confounding factors (18).
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31 In relation to the most appropriate diagnostic glucose threshold, international
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33 authorities including IADPSG and ADA recommend an FPG ≥ 5.1 mmol/L for
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35 diagnosis even in the early stages of pregnancy (1, 19). Prospective cohort studies
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37 conducted in China and Italy suggest that this value is poorly predictive, instead
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39 demonstrating a substantial fall in glucose in early pregnancy, even in those that later
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41 develop glucose intolerance (20, 21). Given that reductions in insulin sensitivity are
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43 observed in high-risk groups prior to the onset of hyperglycaemia, suitable methods
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45 and thresholds to diagnose this could also be explored (5).
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56 Despite early intervention and management, women with early hyperglycaemia had
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58 an increased risk of adverse outcomes compared to those diagnosed routinely at 24-28
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3 weeks gestation. Addressing factors other than glycaemia could mitigate this. The
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5 benefit of aspirin as a means of preventing or delaying pre-eclampsia or of folic acid
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7 in reducing congenital malformation risk could be explored. The need for early
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9 delivery in the same way that delivery of neonates prior to 39 weeks gestation is
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11 recommended for women with pre-gestational diabetes to avoid the risk of still birth
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13 could also be considered (6).
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19 This study has shown that women with hyperglycaemia detected early in pregnancy
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21 represent a separate clinical entity to those diagnosed with hyperglycaemia on routine
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23 diagnostic testing, implicating the importance of length of exposure to
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25 hyperglycaemia independent of maternal adiposity. Indeed, an overlap has been
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27 demonstrated between women with early hyperglycaemia and those with established
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29 and recognised Type 2 DM in terms of materno-fetal outcomes signifying the
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31 importance of screening in high-risk population groups. Practical considerations in
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33 this group include effective screening strategies, early identification and prevention of
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35 risk.
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5.2 Author Contributions:

R.A.J. analysed the data and wrote the manuscript. N.O. contributed to the analysis and reviewed/ edited the manuscript. M.K. collected the data. I.F.G. analysed the data and reviewed/ edited the manuscript. C.Y., J.T. and D.G. contributed to the discussion of the analysis and reviewed the manuscript. D.J. contributed to the analysis and reviewed the manuscript. S.R. contributed to analysis and wrote/ revised the manuscript. S.R. is the guarantor of this work and, as such, takes responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.

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3 **Individual to who reprint requests should be sent to:**
4

5 Professor Stephen Robinson, Department of Metabolic Medicine, Min Wing, St
6

7 Mary's Hospital, Imperial College NHS Trust, W2 1NY, United Kingdom.
8

9 Telephone: +44 203 312 1253

10 Email: Stephen.Robinson@imperial.nhs.uk
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