Prenatal Wildfire Smoke Exposure and Child Development

As wildfires continue to occur each year, often sending smoke and ash across long distances, vulnerable populations including pregnant women have a higher chance of experiencing adverse health effects. Understanding the possible effects of prenatal wildfire smoke exposure on child neurodevelopment is critical to efforts around prevention and early intervention.

This webinar will outline the possible exposures associated with wildfire smoke, review current data from ongoing studies around child neurodevelopment following prenatal wildfire smoke exposure, and discuss ways to reduce and potentially mitigate these risks during pregnancy.

Rebecca Schmidt, PhD, is a tenured full professor at UC Davis and a molecular epidemiologist with over 20 years of research experience in epidemiology, gene-environment interactions, epigenetics, maternal and child health, and a primary emphasis on neurodevelopment and autism. Her pioneering research focuses on how prenatal environmental and nutritional exposures interact with genomics, molecular mechanisms, and developmental programming to influence the neurodevelopmental outcomes of children. She leads a large biorepository and several child development cohort studies, including the MARBLES autism pregnancy cohort, the B-SAFE wildfire pregnancy cohort, and the PEACH cohort site for the national Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program.

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