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# New Research Suggests Children Born to Young Women Are More Likely to Live to 100

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The chances of living to age 100 and beyond nearly double for those born to a woman before her 25th birthday, according to new research by Drs. Leonid Gavrilov and Natalia Gavrilova of the Center on Aging and National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. The findings were made possible by a grant from the Society of Actuaries (SOA) and presented earlier this spring at the Chicago Actuarial Association meeting, suggesting that the age when a woman gives birth has a significant impact on how long her child will live.

This follows a previous SOA-sponsored study, which indicated first-born children, especially daughters, are three times more likely to survive to age 100, but the significance of this birth-order effect was unclear. Researchers have now found that it is the young age of the mother, as opposed to birth order, that may explain why first-born children could celebrate their 100th birthday more often than others.

"This finding may have important social implications because many women postpone their childbearing to later ages because of career demands," explained Dr. Leonid Gavrilov, researcher at the Center.

Previous research by the SOA and the Center revealed predictors for exceptional human longevity may include birth order, place of birth and early-life living conditions.

Using the U.S. Censuses, the Social Security Administration database, genealogical records and complete family histories, nearly 200 validated centenarians born in the United States from 1890-1893 were identified. Their complete family history was reconstructed using records and supplementary data resources in order to identify possible predictors of exceptional human longevity.

"This research helps us better understand the predictors of longevity and quantify the implications on society and business," said Thomas Edwals, fellow of the SOA and president-elect of the Chicago Actuarial Association. "It illustrates that studies on human longevity could be modernized and advanced further by using new, computerized data resources such as genealogies." The PowerPoint Presentation of these new findings presented at the Chicago Actuarial Association is publicly available online at: <http://longevity-science.org/Chicago-Actuary-2006.ppt>

The SOA is an educational, research and professional organization dedicated to serving the public and its 18,000 members. The SOA's vision is for actuaries – business professionals who analyze the financial consequence of risk – to be recognized as the leading professional in the modeling and management of financial risk and contingent events. The SOA's mission is to advance actuarial knowledge and to enhance the ability of actuaries to provide expert advice and relevant solutions for financial, business and societal problems involving uncertain future events. To learn more, visit [www.soa.org](http://www.soa.org).

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