

Self-Reports of Cocaine Use Found to be Poor Indicator of Mothers' Use During Pregnancy

"Measurement of drugs in hair promises deliverance from what may be the flimsiest and most distrusted subject variable in all of science--self-reported use."

This is the observation of researchers who compared measures of cocaine use by hair analysis, urinalysis, and self-report. The study was of a sample of infants in Prince George's County and northeastern Washington, D.C. and their postpartum mothers, who had used crack cocaine during pregnancy.

Researchers found that mothers' self-reports of recent cocaine use were not related to the amount of cocaine found in their infants' hair. On the other hand, maternal hair analysis was found to be a strong and significant indicator of the cocaine found in infant hair. Results also demonstrated an association between maternal urinary cocaine metabolites and infant hair.

Researchers concluded that self-report data routinely collected by interviewers should be "interpreted cautiously."

Since publication of this article, research has continued. Interested persons should contact Dr. Paul Marques at (301) 731-9891, ext. 102.

Correlation of Cocaine Found in	r	N (Pairs)	P
Maternal Hair and Infant Hair	.41	62	<.001
Maternal Urine* and Infant Hair	.28	60	<.02
Maternal Self-Report and Infant Hair Past 30 Days	.06	60	NS

* Maternal urine was tested for the cocaine metabolite benzoylecgonine.

SOURCE: Paul R. Marques et al., "Cocaine in the Hair of Mother-Infant Pairs: Quantitative Analysis and Correlations with Urine Measures and Self-Report," *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 19 (2), pp. 159-175 (1993).

Fall 1993 CESAR Reports Released

The Fall 1993 Issue of CESAR Reports is now available. If you have not yet received your copy, please call CESAR at (301) 403-8329.

For more information about today's topic or to be placed on the distribution list, please call CESAR at (301) 403-8329.
CESAR FAX is supported by a grant from the Governor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission