

PhD Project Description

School/Department:	Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Erasmus MC
Supervisor information:	<p>Names: Prof. dr. Régine P.M. Steegers-Theunissen / dr. Babette Bais E-mail: r.steegers@erasmusmc.nl / b.bais@erasmusmc.nl Website: https://www.erasmusmc.nl/nl-nl/sophia/patientenzorg/zorgverleners/steegers-theunissen-regine</p> <p>Selected publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steegers-Theunissen RP, Verheijden-Paulissen JJ, van Uiter EM, et al. Cohort profile: the Rotterdam periconceptional cohort (Predict Study). <i>Int J Epidemiol</i> 2016;45:374-381. • Van Dijk MR, Koster MPH, Oostingh EC, et al. A Mobile App Lifestyle Intervention to Improve Healthy Nutrition in Women Before and During Early Pregnancy: Single-Center Randomized Controlled Trial. <i>J Med Internet Res</i> 2020; 22 (5): e15773, doi: 10.2196/15773 https://www.jmir.org/2020/5/e15773 • Oostingh EC, Ophuis RH, Koster MPH, et al. Mobile health coaching on nutrition and lifestyle behaviors for subfertile couples using the Smarter Pregnancy Program: model-based cost-effectiveness analysis. <i>JMIR Mhealth Uhealth</i> 2019 vol. 7 iss.10 e13935 1-9 http://mhealth.jmir.org/2019/10/e13935/ • Barker M, Dombrowski SU, Colbourn T, et al. Intervention strategies to improve nutrition and health behaviours before conception. <i>The Lancet</i> 2018, April 16, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30313-1
Project Title:	Periconception mental health: development of monitoring and interventions.
Abstract:	<p>In our research group (Periconception Epidemiology) we investigate the effects of various maternal and paternal lifestyle factors on embryonic and fetal development and growth, such as nutrition, smoking, alcohol, and folic acid, in the unique periconceptional period, defined as the time window from 14 weeks preceding to 10 weeks after conception. Based on these findings, we aim to develop eHealth interventions, such as www.smarterpregnancy.co.uk (www.slimmerzwanger.nl), targeted at improving lifestyle behaviors. A major part of our research is embedded in the Rotterdam periconception cohort (Predict study), a large ongoing prospective cohort study embedded in patient care with recruitment of women and partner in the periconception period. This study started in 2010 and consist of > 3000 women and pregnancies. Here, we focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the determinants of periconceptional health of the couple; • the reproductive performance and pregnancy course and outcome; • the underlying epigenetic profiles to explain associations between periconceptional parental health, reproductive performance and pregnancy course and outcome. <p>Thus far, we have focused on healthy lifestyle behaviors, such as an adequate fruit and vegetable intake. As mental health is an important modifier of lifestyle behavior as well as pregnancy course and outcome, it is our aim to extend our research with this topic and focus in particular on sleep as one of the mental health determinants. The objectives of our project are: 1) to develop tools for improvement of diagnosing, monitoring and treatment of sleep problems before and during pregnancy, and 2) to investigate the impact of periconception maternal sleep problems on (preimplantation) embryonic development and prenatal outcome. For this project we are searching for an ambitious PhD candidate with an interest in the topics: sleep, mental health and pregnancy.</p>
Requirements of candidate:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are looking for a highly motivated, hardworking student to join our international team. • MD or MSc degree in Epidemiology, Health Sciences, Biostatistics or a related field. • You have good communication skills and are a team player, but can also work independently. • Experience in scientific research is a plus. • Scholarship that will, at least, cover subsistence allowance and an international air plane ticket. • English language requirement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>English speaking countries & Netherlands</i>: no requirement. • <i>Other countries</i>: IELTS 7.0 (min 6.0 for all subs), TOEFL 100 (min 20 for all subs).

Application requirements & Deadlines:

<https://www.eur.nl/en/about-eur/erasmus-university-china-centre/csc-scholarship>

Erasmus MC, ranked world

* No.32 for Clinical Medicine US News 2020:

<https://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/clinical-medicine?page=3>

* No. 30 Nature Index for Biomedical Sciences 2019:

<https://www.natureindex.com/supplements/nature-index-2019-biomedical-sciences/tables/healthcare>