

DOHaD 2026 ABSTRACT

Intergenerational Pathways Associated with Cardiometabolic Health Among Young Pacific Adults: A Narrative Review.

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Background: Cardiometabolic diseases are experienced unequally more frequently among Indigenous Oceanic peoples compared with other ethnicities. Increasing evidence suggests intergenerational transmission of ethnic-specific experiences cardiometabolic disease. Significant research also shows that cultural connection can help protect against cardiometabolic disease, strengthened through ethnic-led training, research, and policy change. This study asked, 'How do pathways to favourable cardiometabolic health operate across generations within Pacific families?'

Methods: Literature search across three academic databases: Medline, Web of Science and Scopus. Retrieved records were screened for articles with Pacific Islander family cohorts (e.g. parent-child dyads) and focused on protective factors for cardiometabolic health.

Results: Preliminary results showed pathways to favourable cardiometabolic health operate through coupled biological and socio-cultural transmission across generations. Qualitative findings show intergenerational diabetes cycles sustained by family "legacy" narratives, early disease invisibility, and management barriers, while grandparents' motivation can support interruption of recurrence. Quantitative evidence indicates maternal metabolic status—particularly poor glycaemic control and pre-pregnancy obesity—programmes early offspring adiposity and cord-blood metabolomic profiles. Early feeding is a behavioural mediator: maternal perceptions of infant appetite, feeding routines, and maternal factors associate with infant body composition. Dietary patterns shaped by culture and household context further stratify risk, with modern/westernized patterns linked to higher sugar intake and childhood overweight. Programme acceptability depends on culturally safe, family-led, practically supported engagement, though intervention effects are inconsistent.

Conclusions: Favourable cardiometabolic health across generations emerges when pregnancy health, early feeding/diet behaviours, and culturally safe family engagement align to prevent and disrupt intergenerational diabetes and obesity trajectories.