ORLANDO, FLA. — Having a child cuts the risk of unprovoked venous thromboembolism, according to an epidemiologic study with more than 19,000 women. Compared with women who were never pregnant, women with a history of at least one pregnancy had a 41% reduced risk of venous thromboembolism (VTE) in a multivariate model that was adjusted for several potential confounders, Christiana Iyasere, M.D., said at the annual meeting of the American College of Cardiology.

The difference in risk was statistically significant. Dr. Iyasere and her associates used data collected by questionnaire from the nearly 40,000 women in this study to evaluate the impact of endogenous hormones on VTE risk. They excluded women with a history of VTE, known hypercoagulable states, a history of prolonged immobility, a history of malignancy, or recent trauma. The analyses were done using data collected from the remaining 19,219 women.

Women who had a history of pregnancy had a statistically significant association with both reduced risk of VTE and reduced risk of recurrent VTE.

Dr. Iyasere and her associates used data collected from the remaining 19,219 women.

The researchers were surprised to find no apparent link between other measures of endogenous hormone exposure and VTE risk because exogenous hormones, in the form of oral contraceptives and hormone therapy, are proven risk factors for an increased VTE incidence, Dr. Iyasere said.