

The Effects of Migration on Child Health in Mexico

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This paper investigates the impact of international migration on child health outcomes in rural Mexico using a nationally representative demographic survey. We employ historic migration networks as instruments for current household migration to the United States to correct for the possible endogeneity of migrant status. Children in migrant households are found to have lower rates of infant mortality and higher birth weights than children in nonmigrant households. We study the channels through which migration may affect health outcomes and find evidence that migration raises health knowledge, in addition to having a direct effect on wealth. We also find, however, that preventive health care, such as breast-feeding and vaccinations, is less likely for children in migrant households. These results provide a broader, more nuanced view of the health consequences of migration than is offered by the existing literature.