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Title: The Green Revolution and Infant Mortality: Evidence from 600,000 Births

There is considerable debate on the potential for modern staple seed varieties (MVs) to advance nutrition, and little is known about the contribution of MV diffusion during the “Green Revolution” to the global reduction in mortality achieved during the 20th century. Here we provide global scale estimates of the relationship between MV diffusion and infant mortality between 1960–2000 by constructing a novel, spatially-precise indicator of MV diffusion and leveraging child-level data from nearly 600,000 children across 18,138 villages in 36 developing countries. Results indicate that the diffusion of MVs reduced infant mortality by 3.7–4.2 percentage points (from a baseline of 17%), with stronger associations for male infants. These results are robust to a host of statistical controls and alternative measures of MV diffusion that reduce potential confounding. The sizable contribution of MV adoption to improved welfare should inform global food and development policy.