Objective. The purpose of this study to consider whether attachment security in mothers and fathers promotes more successful early coparenting adjustment, to assess the role of marital quality in amplifying or diminishing any such effects, and to examine interactive effects of maternal and paternal attachment status on coparenting.

Design. Eighty-five couples transitioning to new parenthood completed Main and Goldwyn’s Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and a multimethod marital evaluation during the pregnancy’s third trimester and participated in comprehensive assessments of coparenting conflict and cohesion at 3 months postpartum.

Results. Maternal Insecure attachment status predicted higher levels of coparental conflict, as did father Secure status. Families with Insecure fathers exhibited lower coparental cohesion on the whole. Maternal attachment status moderated the relation between paternal attachment status and cohesion, with Insecure father/Secure mother dyads exhibiting the lowest levels of cohesion, and Secure/Secure dyads showing the highest levels. Prenatal marital quality predicted 3-month coparenting cohesion, but not conflict. Prenatal marital quality did not interact with parental attachment status in the prediction of coparenting, but relations between parents’ attachment status and coparenting maintained after controlling for marital quality.

Conclusion. Prenatally assessed attachment status in both mothers and fathers predicts dimensions of coparenting early in the family life cycle. The impact of attachment status differs in important ways as a function of parent gender, and security in some cases exacerbated rather than buffered the negative impact of partner insecurity on coparental functioning. Effects of parental attachment security on coparenting cannot be properly estimated without reference to contextual factors.