

RISK FACTORS OF PRETERM BABIES

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ABSTRACT

Premature birth gives the baby less time to develop in the womb. Health care providers consider the following factors to put women at high risk for preterm labour or birth: Women who have delivered preterm before, or who have experienced preterm labour before, are considered to be at high risk for preterm labor and birth. Being pregnant with twins, triplets, or more (called "multiple gestations") or the use of assisted reproductive technology is associated with a higher risk of preterm labor and birth. One study showed that more than 50% of twin births occurred preterm, compared with only 10% of births of single infants. Women with certain abnormalities of the reproductive organs are at greater risk for preterm labor and birth than are women who do not have these abnormalities. For instance, women who have a short cervix (the lower part of the uterus) or whose cervix shortens in the second trimester (fourth through sixth months) of pregnancy instead of the third trimester are at high risk for preterm delivery.

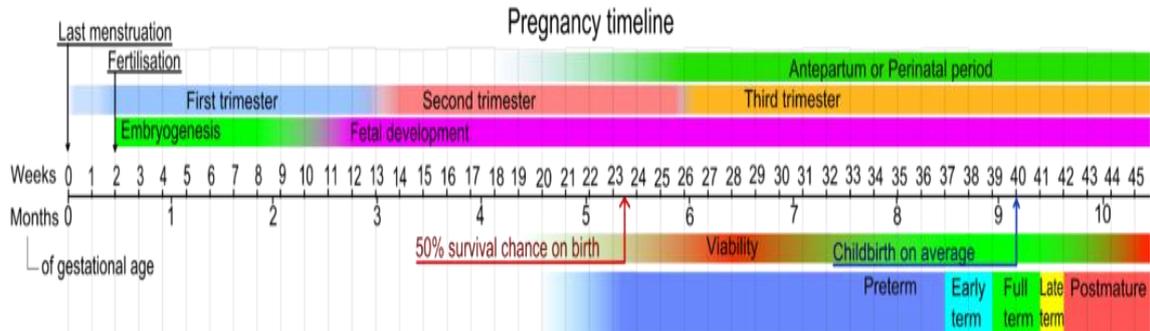
KEYWORDS: Preterm Birth, Preterm Labor.**INTRODUCTION**

Normally, a pregnancy usually lasts about 40 weeks. Premature birth gives the baby less time to develop in the womb. Premature babies, especially those born earliest, often have complicated medical problems. Preterm is defined as babies born alive before 37 weeks of pregnancy are completed. There are sub-categories of preterm birth, based on gestational age:

- Extremely preterm (less than 28 weeks)
- Very preterm (28 to 32 weeks)
- Moderate to late preterm (32 to 37 weeks).



Induction or caesarean birth should not be planned before 39 completed weeks unless medically indicated. Preterm birth rates have been reported to range from 5% to 7% of live births in some developed countries, but are estimated to be substantially higher in developing countries. Each year, more than 1 in 10 of the world's babies are born preterm, resulting in 15 million babies born too soon. Preterm birth has been the leading cause of neonatal mortality world wide for about a decade. However, during 2012 new global estimates placed preterm birth as the number two cause of child mortality, behind pneumonia with more than a million death each year. Risk of death or neurosensory disability increases with decreasing gestational age. Approximately 45-50% of preterm births are idiopathic, 30% are related to preterm rupture of membrane (PROM) and another 15-20% are attributed to medically indicated or elective preterm deliveries.



Weight, Length and Head Circumference By Gestational Age For Boys.

| Gestational age | Weight | Length | Head circumference |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 40 weeks | 7 lbs., 15 oz. (3.6 kg) | 20 in. (51 cm) | 13.8 in. (35 cm) |
| 35 weeks | 5 lbs., 8 oz. (2.5 kg) | 18.1 in. (46 cm) | 12.6 in. (32 cm) |
| 32 weeks | 3 lbs., 15.5 oz. (1.8 kg) | 16.5 in. (42 cm) | 11.6 in. (29.5 cm) |
| 28 weeks | 2 lbs., 6.8 oz. (1.1 kg) | 14.4 in. (36.5 cm) | 10.2 in. (26 cm) |
| 24 weeks | 1 lb., 6.9 oz. (0.65 kg) | 12.2 in. (31 cm) | 8.7 in. (22 cm) |

Weight, Length And Head Circumference By Gestational Age For Girls.

| Gestational age | Weight | Length | Head circumference |
|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 40 weeks | 7 lbs., 7.9oz. (3.4 kg) | 20 in. (51 cm) | 13.8 in. (35 cm) |
| 35 weeks | 5 lbs., 4.7oz. (2.4 kg) | 17.7 in. (45 cm) | 12.4 in. (31.5 cm) |
| 32 weeks | 3 lbs., 12 oz. (1.7 kg) | 16.5 in. (42 cm) | 11.4 in. (29 cm) |
| 28 weeks | 2 lbs., 3.3 oz. (1.0 kg) | 14.4in. (36cm) | 9.8in. (265cm) |
| 24 weeks | 1 lb., 5.2 oz. (0.60 kg) | 12.6 in. (32cm) | 8.3 in. (21 cm) |

Risk Factors

Medical and pregnancy characteristics

Personal history, Fertility treatments, IVF, Twins, Shortened cervix, Mental health (Depression, stress),

Underweight, Infections, Air pollution Infection within the uterus, Medical disorders (thyroid disease, obesity, asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure).

Are you at risk for premature birth?
 These three risk factors make you most likely to give birth early:

- Prior Premature Birth**
- Multiple Pregnancy**
- Cervical and Uterine Problems**

Some other risk factors include:

- Family History**
Someone in your family has a premature baby or if you were born prematurely
- Maternal Health Conditions**
High blood pressure, preeclampsia, diabetes, blood clotting disorders
- Weight**
Weight problems before pregnancy and on gaining enough weight during pregnancy
- Smoking**
Women who smoke during pregnancy
- Maternal Age**
Pregnant women younger than 17, or older than 35
- Stress**
Prolonged and High levels of stress

#FightForPreemiesPH

If you have concerns about whether you are at risk for giving birth early, see your health care provider. With guidance and care, you will have a better chance of having a healthy pregnancy.

Social characteristics

Black race, Teens and women over age 35, Low.

Health behaviours

Tobacco use, Alcohol.

Preterm labor: Week 23 to end of Week 28

The fetus' eyes start forming from around Week 23 and is completely formed sometime around Week 28. If the baby is delivered before Week 28, the retina is not yet completely formed. The baby will be at a higher risk of Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) – abnormal growth of the retinal blood vessels – and might be at risk of losing their vision. Also, as the brain has yet to develop completely, the baby will also be at risk of developing cerebral palsy.

Preterm labor: Week 29 to end of Week 36

Once pregnancy reaches Week 29, most of the vital organs are almost all completely formed. So, even if the baby is delivered from Week 29 onward, there are fewer risks and possible complications that can arise. The lungs are the slowest in terms of their development, and will only be complete sometime around Week 35. If the baby is delivered before their lungs are fully functional, then there is a need for a ventilator to help the baby breathe.

A baby born after Week 35 is not very different from a full term baby as almost all of their organs are fully functional. However, a newborn infant would be admitted into the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) so their condition can be monitored until the worst is over and your baby is stronger and can do without the help of the ventilator

CONCLUSION

Medical disorders (thyroid disease, obesity, asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure), Black race, Teens and women over age 35, Tobacco use, Alcohol may increase the risk of preterm birth.

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