

Women who engaged in health coaching with Ovia Health were 2x more likely to receive cervical length screenings during pregnancy

A PEER-REVIEWED STUDY

**Presented at the American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG)
2021 Annual Clinical and Scientific Meeting**

Why this matters

Measuring the length of the cervix during pregnancy is a proven way of identifying risk for and avoiding preterm delivery.

Background

Measuring cervical length is not a part of routine prenatal screening – despite the fact that having a cervix length less than 2 centimeters long greatly **increases a woman's risk of a dangerous and costly preterm delivery**. According to the March of Dimes, women with short cervixes have a 1-in-2 chance (50%) of preterm delivery.^[1]

Women who have their cervical length measured and receive progesterone therapy, if indicated, have significantly lower rates of preterm delivery. Progesterone has been shown to help women with short cervixes carry to term, yet less than half of those eligible for this therapy receive a prescription. While it may seem like an extra service, measuring cervixes is included in the bundled price of prenatal care and is also a cost-effective measure in the long run.^[2]

In previous publications, Ovia Health's research team has uncovered that one of the most influential barriers to cervical length measurement is patient lack of comfort discussing the measurement with their provider. As a result, **Ovia Health designed programming focused on self-advocacy and patient-provider communications, supported by Ovia Health's coaches - all licensed clinicians.**

Study design

Our study followed 381 members of Ovia Pregnancy who were given access to a digital education program focused on preventing preterm delivery. **A total of 199 (52%) of the participants engaged with our health coaching services**, whereas 182 did not.

Those who did engage **received education about the benefit of cervical length measurement and guidance on how to self-advocate for the inclusion of a cervical length screening** at their mid-trimester ultrasound appointments. In cases where providers stated that routine screening of otherwise low-risk patients was unnecessary, coaches provided members with evidence of efficacy to share with their healthcare team.

Key findings

Using patient-reported outcomes from these 381 members, we found that women who engaged with Ovia Health's coaching services were:



Health coaching makes a difference

Our findings validated the vital role of health coaching. In this case, our coaches increased the likelihood of cervical length screenings – a demonstrably effective way of identifying risk for and avoiding preterm delivery. Health coaching was also shown to boost participation in our preterm delivery prevention and medication adherence programs.



The impact of preterm deliveries

About 10%

Percentage of babies who are born premature in the U.S.^[3]

25.4 days

Average number of days a premature baby spends in a specialty care nursery^[4]

\$144,692

Average cost of a premature baby's specialty care nursery stay^[5]

\$26.2 billion

Total annual cost of preterm deliveries in the U.S.^[6]

Learnings:

Your organization could benefit from coaching services

The Ovia Health platform and coaching services can help you improve care and control costs by ensuring better pregnancy outcomes for your employees and members. Through education, advocating for appropriate screenings, and promoting progesterone adherence, we have been able to reduce the rates of preterm delivery by 28%.

[1] <https://www.marchofdimes.org/complications/progesterone-treatment-to-help-prevent-premature-birth.aspx>

[2] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21157771/>

[3] <https://www.marchofdimes.org/mission/the-economic-and-societal-costs.aspx>

[3] https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/pdfdocs/nicu_summary_final.pdf

[4] https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/pdfdocs/nicu_summary_final.pdf

[5] <https://www.marchofdimes.org/mission/the-economic-and-societal-costs.aspx>