

## Maternity Information Law

New York State's Maternity Information Law requires each hospital to provide the following information about its childbirth practices and procedures. The information can help you to better understand what you can expect, learn more about your childbirth choices, and plan for your baby's birth.

Most of the information is given in percentages of all the deliveries occurring in the hospital during a given year. For example, if 20 births out of 100 are by Caesarean section, the Caesarean rate will be 20%; if external fetal monitoring is used in 50 out of 100 births, or one-half of all births, the rate will be 50%.

This information, alone, doesn't tell you that one hospital is better than another for you. If a hospital has fewer than 200 births a year, the use of special procedures in just a few births could change its rates.

The types of births could affect the rates, as well. Some hospitals offer specialized services to women who are expected to have complicated or high-risk births, or whose babies are not expected to develop normally. These hospitals can be expected to have higher rates of the special procedures than hospitals that do not offer these services.

This information also does not tell you about your doctor's or nurse-midwife's practice. However, the information can be used when discussing your choices and wishes with your doctor or nurse-midwife, and to find out if his or her use of special procedures is similar to or different from that of the hospital.

You should play an active role in making your childbirth the kind of experience you want. To do so, you need information. Take part in childbirth preparation classes and read books about childbirth. Ask questions and discuss your wishes with your doctor or nurse-midwife. A free booklet, "Your Guide to a Healthy Birth" is available from the State Department of Health. For your copy, just write: Healthy Babies, Box 2000, Albany, NY 12220.

## Rates\* of Selected Procedures in Childbirth

100 %	Total births at Sloane Hospital for Women
33.25 %	of births were Caesarean sections
21.3 %	of births were primary Caesarean sections
11.95 %	of births were repeat Caesarean sections
3.0 %	of vaginal births were vaginal births after previous Caesarean sections (VBAC)
N A	of births delivered by midwives
100 %	of births involved external fetal monitoring
15 %	of births involved internal fetal monitoring
2.36 %	of births involved low forceps delivery
0 %	of births involved mid forceps delivery
0.5 %	of births were breech births delivered vaginally
80 %	of births involved analgesia
0 %	of vaginal births included general anesthesia
1 %	of vaginal births included spinal anesthesia
79 %	of vaginal births included epidural anesthesia during labor or delivery
0 %	of vaginal births included paracervical anesthesia
3 %	of Caesarean sections included general anesthesia
61 %	of Caesarean sections included spinal anesthesia
36 %	of Caesarean sections included epidural anesthesia
33.54 %	of births involved induction of labor
20.25 %	of births involved augmentation of labor
20 %	of vaginal births included episiotomy

\* Annual data through 12/03

## Definitions

**Analgesia:** Medication is used to decrease the sensation of pain.

**Anesthesia:** A medication or other agent is used to cause a loss of feeling. For **General Anesthesia**, a gas or intravenous medication is used to make the mother unconscious during delivery. For **Spinal Anesthesia**, a drug is injected into the lower spinal area to numb the vaginal region. For **Epidural Anesthesia**, a drug is given through a fine tube inserted in the mother's lower back to numb the vaginal area and lower abdomen. For **Paracervical Anesthesia**, a drug is injected into the cervix (opening of the womb) to relieve pain of labor.

**Augmentation of Labor:** A drug is used to help labor contractions continue or become stronger.

**Birthing Room:** An in-hospital arrangement in which labor, birth and immediate recovery after birth all occur in the same room. In some hospitals, it may be called an "LDR" or "LDRP".

**Breech Birth:** A birth in which the infant's buttocks and/or feet enter the birth canal first.

**Caesarean Section:** A surgical operation in which the baby is delivered through incisions (cuts) made in the mother's abdomen and uterus. A **Primary Caesarean Section** is the mother's first, even if she has given birth vaginally before. A **Repeat Caesarean Section** is when the mother has had one or more Caesarean sections previously.

**Episiotomy:** An incision sometimes made to enlarge the vaginal opening.

**Fetal Monitoring:** Electronic recording of contractions and the baby's heartbeat. **External Fetal Monitoring** involves the use of small instruments held in place on the mother's abdomen by belts. **Internal Fetal Monitoring** involves inserting a small tube with a fine wire into the uterus and attaching the wire to the baby's scalp. Also, a soft tube may be placed along side of the baby's head to measure contractions.

**Forceps Delivery:** Spoon-shaped instruments, called forceps, are used to help deliver the baby. In a **Low Forceps Delivery**, the instruments are not used until the baby's head has moved through the pelvis. In a **Mid Forceps Delivery**, the instruments are used before the baby's head has moved through the pelvis.

**Medical Induction of Labor:** A medication is used to start labor contractions.

**Nurse-Midwife:** A registered nurse who has specialized midwifery training to care for women and babies during pregnancy, childbirth and after birth.

**Rooming-In:** An arrangement in which the mother and infant are cared for in the same room for all or a substantial part of the day.

**Vaginal Birth After Caesarean Section (VBAC):** The mother has had a Caesarean section previously, but delivers this baby vaginally.