

THE DISABILITY AND PREGNANCY STUDY

snapshot



Prenatal Care Adequacy among Women with Disabilities in Ontario: A Population-Based Cohort Study

What is the research about?

Getting regular and enough prenatal care makes pregnancy complications less likely. However, even in countries where health care is free, not everyone gets prenatal care equally, with young mothers and those living in poverty getting less than the amount of care they are supposed to get. Little is known about the amount of prenatal care that women with disabilities get.

What did the researchers do?

The researchers used health administrative data held at [ICES](#) to look at all Ontario women with a physical, sensory, or intellectual/developmental disability, and those with multiple disabilities, who were 15 to 49 years of age and had a birth in 2003 to 2017. [Prenatal care adequacy](#) was defined by when women had their first prenatal care visit with a family physician or obstetrician and how many visits they got, compared to what medical guidelines recommend.

What did the researchers find?

- Most women with disabilities got as much as or more prenatal care compared to what guidelines recommend, similar to their peers without disabilities.

- Women with physical, sensory, and multiple disabilities were more likely than those without disabilities to get more prenatal care than what is recommended.
- Women with sensory, intellectual/developmental, and multiple disabilities were more likely to get less prenatal care than what is recommended.
- Women with sensory and intellectual/developmental disabilities were more likely to not get any prenatal care, and women with physical disabilities were less likely to not get any prenatal care.

What you need to know

Some women with disabilities do not have equal access to prenatal care.

There is a need to tackle barriers women with disabilities experience getting regular and enough prenatal care.

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About the Disability and Pregnancy Study

The Disability and Pregnancy Study is a research program aiming to enhance the perinatal care of women with disabilities. This work is conducted by an international team of researchers in partnership with a dedicated Advisory Committee comprised of individuals with lived experience, service-providers, and policy-makers.

Support

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Keywords

*Disability, Fertility, Obstetrics,
Pregnancy rates*



Images in this report were obtained from the following sources:

1. Sunnybrook Hospital. (2017). Making pregnancy more accessible for women with disabilities. Retrieved June 29, 2018 from <http://health.sunnybrook.ca/pregnancy/accessible-care-pregnancy-clinic/>
2. BabyCentre. (2018). Baby signing. Retrieved June 29, 2018 from <https://www.babycentre.co.uk/a547348/baby-signing>
3. American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults. (2010). Blind children with additional disabilities. Retrieved June 29, 2018 from <https://nfb.org/Images/nfb/Publications/fr/fr29/2/fr2902tc.htm>

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How can we use this research?

These findings show the need to tackle barriers to prenatal care so that all women with disabilities can get the care they need. Efforts should include developing inclusive, accessible, and respectful health care services for women with disabilities before and during pregnancy. Efforts should also address some of the broader social barriers that make it harder to access care when it is needed.

About the researchers

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Do you want to know more?

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