



## United States Maternity Care Facts and Figures February 2011

This fact sheet updates various national maternity statistics provided in *Evidence-Based Maternity Care: What It Is and What It Can Achieve*<sup>1</sup> with new data now available.

### Size of the Population Involved

In 2008, there were more than 4.2 million births in the United States, down 2% from the largest number ever registered in 2007.<sup>2</sup>

### Hospital Care of Childbearing Women and Newborns

Of those discharged from U.S. hospitals in 2008, 23% were childbearing women and newborns. Care of childbearing women and their newborns was by far the most common reason for hospitalization.<sup>3</sup>

Six of the ten most common hospital procedures in 2008 were maternity-related<sup>3</sup>:

<u>Maternal and Newborn Procedures</u>	<u>Rank Among All Procedures</u>
prophylactic vaccinations and inoculations	2
cesarean section	5
repair of obstetric laceration	6
circumcision	8
artificial rupture of membranes to assist delivery	9
fetal monitoring	10

Cesarean section, the most common operating room procedure in the country in 2008, was performed in 1.4 million women.<sup>3</sup> The 2009 cesarean rate of 32.9% marked the 13th consecutive year of increase and a record-level national rate.<sup>2,4</sup> The cesarean rate varied across states in 2009, from a low of 22.8% in New Mexico to a high of 39.6% in Louisiana, and was 48.0% in Puerto Rico.<sup>4</sup> In 2006, the cesarean section rate varied by payer — from private insurance (34%) to Medicaid (30%) to uninsured women (25%).<sup>5</sup>

The rate of vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) was 9.7% in 2006, a decline of 73% from 1997, when the VBAC rate was 35.3%.<sup>5</sup>

### Maternity Outcomes

The rate of preterm birth rose from 10.6% in 1990 to 12.8% in 2006. It declined modestly in 2007 (12.7%), 2008 (12.3%), and 2009 (12.2%).<sup>2,4</sup> Across states, the 2009 preterm birth rate ranged from 9.3% in Vermont to 18.0% in Mississippi.<sup>4</sup>

The rate of low birthweight rose fairly steadily for more than two decades and recently leveled off. This rate was 6.7% in 1984, reached 8.3% in 2006, and was 8.2% in 2007, 2008, and 2009.<sup>2,4</sup> Across states, the 2009 low birthweight rate ranged from 5.8% in South Dakota to 12.2% in Mississippi.<sup>4</sup>

In comparison with both non-Hispanic white and Hispanic infants, non-Hispanic black infants experienced much higher rates of both preterm birth and low birthweight.<sup>4</sup>

## **Paying for Maternity Care**

*All payers.* In 2008, facility charges billed for "mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" (\$98 billion) far exceeded charges for any other hospital condition in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

*Medicaid.* In 2008, 41% of all maternal childbirth-related hospital stays were billed to Medicaid.<sup>6</sup> The two most common hospital conditions billed to Medicaid as the primary payer in 2007 were pregnancy and childbirth (28%) and newborns (26%), which together comprised 53% of discharges billed to Medicaid.<sup>7</sup> Between 1997 and 2007, newborn discharges billed to Medicaid increased by 55%, and pregnancy and childbirth discharges increased by 47%.<sup>7</sup>

"Mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" were the two most expensive hospital conditions billed to Medicaid in 2008, involving 26% of hospital charges to Medicaid, or \$41 billion.<sup>6</sup>

*Private insurance.* In 2008, 52% of all maternal childbirth-related hospital stays were billed to private insurers.<sup>6</sup> The two most common hospital conditions billed to private insurance as the primary payer in 2007 were pregnancy and childbirth (18%) and newborns (17%), which together comprised 35% of discharges billed to private insurance.<sup>7</sup> There were no significant changes in the number of pregnancy and childbirth discharges with private insurance as the expected payer between 1997 and 2007.<sup>7</sup>

"Mother's pregnancy and delivery" and "newborn infants" were the two most expensive hospital conditions billed to private insurance in 2008, involving 14% of hospital charges to private insurers, or \$50 billion.<sup>6</sup>

## **References**

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