



APRIL IS CESAREAN AWARENESS MONTH

#CAM2022 #CesareanAwarenessMonth #CAMfacts

Cesarean Awareness Month focuses on all topics surrounding cesareans, including reducing preventable cesareans. Cesarean delivery can be a life-saving procedure for certain medical indications. However, for most low-risk pregnancies, cesarean delivery poses avoidable maternal risks of morbidity and mortality, including hemorrhage, infection, and blood clots—risks that compound with subsequent cesarean deliveries.ⁱ Lowering the rate of preventable cesareans is vital to improving maternal and child health.ⁱⁱ The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that **caesarean sections (c-sections) should only be performed when medically necessary.**ⁱⁱⁱ

Cesarean Section Awareness Month Toolkit resources are available here:
<https://www.ican-online.org/cesarean-awareness-month-toolkit/#tab-keymessages>


CESAREANS BY THE NUMBERS

Data:

A low-risk birth is defined as first birth (nulliparous), term (37 or more completed weeks of gestation), singleton (one fetus), and vertex/cephalic (head first).^{iv} The low-risk cesarean delivery rate is the number of low-risk births delivered by cesarean per 100 low-risk births.ⁱⁱⁱ

In Kansas:

- The low-risk cesarean delivery rate has been steadily increasing, from 23.8% in 2016 to 24.6% in 2020, a 3.4% increase.
- Nearly one in four low-risk first births were delivered by cesarean in lieu of a vaginal birth in 2020.

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Trend	HP2030
Percent	23.8%	23.8%	24.2%	24.6%	23.8%	 *	23.6%

*Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas birth data (resident)
 Red arrow indicates an increasingly negative trend.

Much of the increase in cesarean delivery (over 50% in the past decade), and wide variation across states, hospitals, and practitioners, can be attributed to first-birth cesareans.¹ Moreover, cesarean delivery in low-risk first births may be most responsive to intervention through quality improvement efforts such as the following:ⁱ

- [National Quality Forum - #0471 PC-02 Cesarean Section](#)
- [Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health \(AIM\) patient safety bundle for Safe Reduction of Primary Cesarean Birth](#)

Medical indications for a cesarean birth:

- Failure of labor to progress—Contractions may not open the cervix enough for the baby to move into the vagina.
- Concern for the baby—For instance, the umbilical cord may become pinched or compressed or fetal monitoring may detect an abnormal heart rate.
- Multiple pregnancy—If a woman is pregnant with twins, a cesarean birth may be necessary if the babies are being born too early, are not in good positions in the uterus, or if there are other problems. The likelihood of having a cesarean birth increases with the number of babies a woman is carrying.
- Problems with the placenta
- A very large baby
- Breech presentation
- Maternal infections, such as human immunodeficiency virus or herpes
- Maternal medical conditions, such as diabetes mellitus or high blood pressure^v

Possible complications of cesarean birth include:

- Infection
- Blood loss
- Blood clots in legs, pelvic organs, or lungs
- Injury to the bowel or bladder
- Reaction to medications or anesthesia that is used^v

Women who previously had a cesarean birth before may be able to give birth vaginally with subsequent pregnancies. The decision depends on the type of incision used in the previous cesarean delivery, the number of previous cesarean deliveries, whether there are any conditions that make a vaginal delivery risky, as well as other factors.^v

PROVIDER & PATIENT RESOURCES

- **The American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists:** [Counseling Regarding Approach to Delivery After Cesarean](#)
- **The American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists:** [Cesarean FAQ's](#)
- **Mayo Clinic:** [Reasons for Cesarean Sections](#)
- **March of Dimes:** [Having a Cesarean Section](#)
- **March of Dimes:** [Medical Reasons for Cesarean Sections](#)
- **Office of Women's Health:** [Labor and Birth](#)

SOURCES

- i. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM). Obstetric Care Consensus: Safe Prevention of the Primary Cesarean Delivery. Number 1 March 2014 (Reaffirmed 2016). <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/obstetric-care-consensus/articles/2014/03/safe-prevention-of-the-primary-cesarean-delivery>
- ii. International Cesarean Awareness Network. Cesarean Awareness Month Toolkit. <https://www.ican-online.org/cesarean-awareness-month-toolkit/#tab-keymessages> . Retrieved January 2022.
- iii. World Health Organization. Cesarean sections should only be performed when medically necessary says WHO. Retrieved February 15, 2022, from https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/maternal_perinatal/cs-statement/en/
- iv. Osterman MJK, Martin JA. Trends in low-risk cesarean delivery in the United States, 1990–2013. National vital statistics reports; vol 63 no 6. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2014.
- v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). <https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/cesarean-birth> Retrieved February 2022.

SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES



The Kansas Department of Health and Environment created these graphics and sample posts to help you raise awareness about Cesarean Awareness Month. Posts can be customized to include your community-specific information. Hashtag suggestions: #CAM2022, #CesareanAwarenessMonth and #CAMfacts.

Post 1

C-sections are not always necessary! If your pregnancy is healthy and you don't have any medical complications, it's best to deliver your baby by vaginal birth.

Learn more: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/c-section-medical-reasons.aspx>

Post 2

Sometimes a c-section might be the safest way to deliver your baby. Your provider might recommend a c-section if:

- Your labor isn't progressing
- Baby is in distress
- There are multiple babies (twins, etc.)
- You have a health concern
- You have had a previous c-section

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/c-section/about/pac-20393655>

Post 3

If there are problems with your pregnancy or with your baby's health, a c-section may be the safest way for you to have your baby. Remember having a healthy baby is more important than how the baby is born.

Learn more: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/c-section-medical-reasons.aspx>

Post 4

Cesarean delivery poses health risks to mom that could be avoided if not medically necessary. Know the facts. Talk with your health care provider to decide what is best for you and your baby.

Learn more: [Cesarean Birth | ACOG](#)