Inter-conception Care

Issue

Women with prior history of complications during pregnancy or poor pregnancy outcomes are at greater risk for problems in their future pregnancies. For these women, it is particularly important to have continuity of medical care in the inter-conception period between their pregnancies, which includes making informed decisions about the spacing interval between pregnancies.

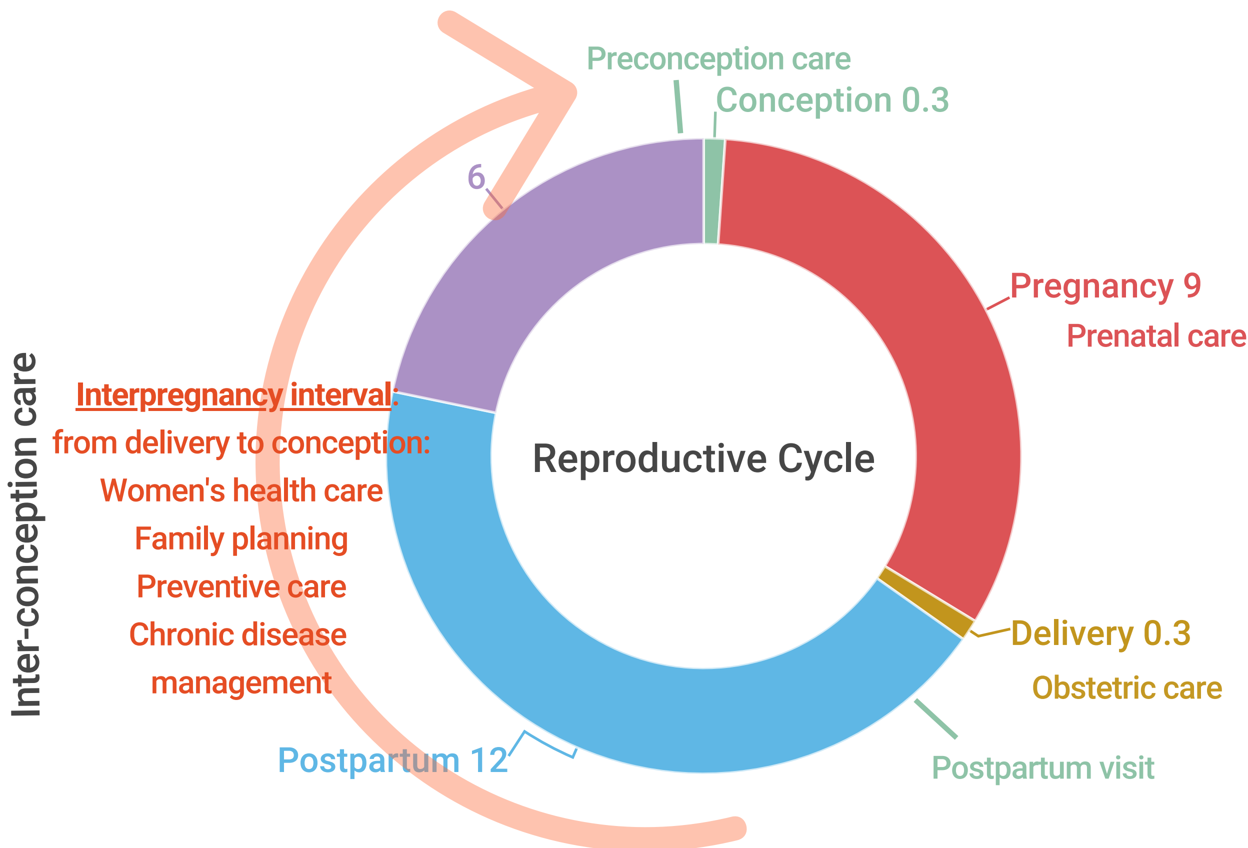


Figure 4: Reproductive cycle with months of duration, based on an 18-month interpregnancy interval & opportunities for health care

Recommendation

The CDRC supports the Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium's birth spacing campaign to reframe the postpartum visit as an inter-conception care visit and the optimal birth spacing of 18 months.

Findings

Inter-conception Care

There is room for improvement in getting women—particularly those at highest risk and with a recent fetal or infant loss—to follow up for postpartum and family planning care. There was lack of documented counseling on birth spacing intervals in most FIMR cases, and only a small fraction had documentation of counseling to wait at least 18 months. An interpregnancy interval of at least 18 months is recommended by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists because evidence shows that short interpregnancy intervals increase the risk for poor subsequent pregnancy outcomes such as preterm birth and small for gestational age infants.(7)(8)(9)

<table>
<tr><th>FIMR</th><th>2017</th><th>2016</th><th>2014-2015</th></tr>
<tr><td>Mother went to her postpartum visit</td><td>61%</td><td>71%</td><td>63%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother with a prior history of a fetal loss</td><td>3%</td><td>6%</td><td rowspan="2">35%^</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother with a prior history of an infant loss</td><td>4%</td><td>11%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother with a prior low birthweight delivery*</td><td>12%</td><td>7%</td><td rowspan="2">15%#</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother with a prior preterm delivery*</td><td>24%</td><td>19%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Preconception care visit documented</td><td>11%</td><td></td><td>Not recorded</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother who received care for her chronic health condition prior to her pregnancy</td><td>21%</td><td>18%</td><td>Not recorded</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother who received pregnancy planning or birth spacing education prior to the pregnancy</td><td>18%</td><td>17%</td><td>Not recorded</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother who was counseled to wait at least 18 months prior to getting pregnant again</td><td>6%</td><td>4%</td><td>5%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Family planning counseling offered postpartum</td><td>64%</td><td>58%</td><td>63%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mother with <18 month interpregnancy interval</td><td>19%</td><td>19%</td><td>15%</td></tr>
<tr><td>No prenatal care</td><td>11%</td><td>6%</td><td>7%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Late entry into prenatal care in 2nd or 3rd trimester</td><td>13%</td><td>13%</td><td>17%</td></tr>
</table>

*Mothers with an infant death had a significantly higher prevalence of this history compared to those with a fetal death

^History of fetal or infant loss

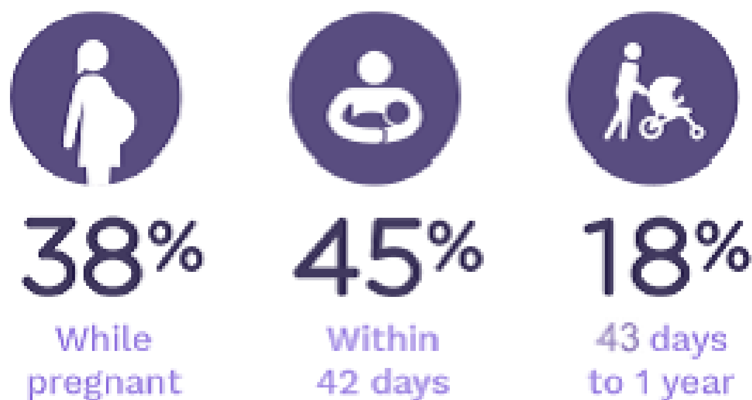
#Low birthweight or preterm history

Inter-conception Care

MMR	2011-2017 (n=29)
Maternal death occurred <42 days postpartum	52%
Maternal death occurred 43 days-365 days postpartum	10%

Postpartum is also a time when the mother's physical and mental health needs to be monitored. Over the course of seven years of maternal mortality review in Delaware, 62% of maternal deaths have occurred in the first year postpartum, mostly within the first 42 days. Nationally, findings from nine MMR programs compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also found that the early postpartum period was the most common time for pregnancy-related deaths: 45% of 237 pregnancy-related deaths occurred in the first 42 days after pregnancy (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Distribution of pregnancy-related deaths by timing of death in relation to pregnancy



Source: Building U.S. Capacity to Review and Prevent Maternal Deaths. Report from nine maternal mortality review committees. 2018. Accessed from: http://reviewtoaction.org/sites/default/files/national-portal-material/Report%20from%20Nine%20MMRCs%20final%20edit.pdf on April 16, 2018.

7. ACOG. Committee Opinion: optimizing postpartum care. Number 666. June 2016. Accessed at: https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Obstetric-Practice/Optimizing-Postpartum-Care on April 19, 2018.
8. Grisaru-Granovsky S, Gordon E, et al. Effect of interpregnancy interval on adverse perinatal outcomes—a national study. Contraception 2009; 80(6): 512-518.
9. Conde-Agudelo A, Rosas-Bermudez A, Kafury-Goeta AC. Birth spacing and risk of adverse perinatal outcomes: a meta-analysis. JAMA 2006; 295(15): 1809-1823.

Inter-conception Care

Figure 6: Materials developed for the Delaware birth spacing campaign for patients and providers

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BIRTH SPACING

Waiting 18 months between pregnancies is good for mom, good for baby, and good for family!

Implementing the Birth Spacing Campaign

Designate someone in your office to be in charge of implementing the birth spacing campaign.

Share the materials with everyone in your office so they know about the campaign, its goals and why your office is participating.

Train your nurses and others in your office on the importance of birth spacing.

Display the "Give Them Some Space" Brochure and Poster in your waiting room and exam rooms.

At the first prenatal visit, during the third trimester, and at the postpartum visit, give your patients the birth spacing educational materials. This is a perfect time for your nurses to personally educate your patients on why birth spacing is so important. Encourage them to emphasize the benefits for mom, baby, and family.

- **For mom:** give her time to heal, recover, and regain energy.
- **For baby:** more time for bonding, interacting and play time.
- **For family:** more time for parents to have with each other.

Document birth spacing education was done at the first prenatal visit, third trimester, and postpartum visit.

When your supplies of materials are running low, visit dethrives.com to order more materials. All materials are free of charge.