

## news release

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### NEW REPORT ASKS HOSPITALS TO IMPROVE PREGNANCY CARE AND OFFERS PRACTICAL TIPS FOR MOMS-TO-BE

NEW YORK, DEC. 15, 2010 – Moms and babies everywhere deserve high quality health care and a new report from the March of Dimes and its partners offers providers a vision for how to offer top-notch services while giving moms practical tips to help them make smart choices.

*Toward Improving the Outcome of Pregnancy III: Enhancing Perinatal Health Through Quality, Safety and Performance Initiatives (TIOP III)*, released today, redefines maternal and child care and offers ideas for moms, doctors, nurses, and hospitals to make pregnancy care more standardized and accessible nationwide, so that every mom and baby in every state gets the best possible care.

“This is a historic day for the March of Dimes,” said Dr. Jennifer L. Howse, president of the March of Dimes. “We expect this report to stimulate discussion, energize change, and impel action in hospitals across the country. We hope it will usher in a new era of perinatal quality improvement and a healthier start in life for more babies.”

The report was presented at a luncheon for reporters here. Mark Chassin, MD, FACP, MPP, MPH, president of The Joint Commission, the nation’s predominant standards-setting and accrediting body in health care, offered recommendations on best practices for health care providers and hospitals. He also encouraged hospitals to adopt The Joint Commission’s new voluntary perinatal care measure set, which addresses several maternal and infant health issues, including elective deliveries, infections and breast feeding.

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Miriam Arond, director of The Good Housekeeping Research Institute and a member of the March of Dimes Board of Trustees, gave specific tips women can use to get quality medical care for themselves and their baby, including:

- Get a medical check-up before becoming pregnant;
- Find out if your pregnancy is at high risk; if so, ask for referral to a specialist;
- Ask for the appropriate ultrasounds, including one in the first trimester to date the pregnancy;
- Don't request or agree to an induction or c-section before 39 weeks unless it's medically necessary.

Scott D. Berns, MD, MPH, senior vice president for Chapter Programs of the March of Dimes and editor of the report, described the organization's action agenda for *TIOP III* that includes expanding the use of a quality improvement program to reduce unnecessary inductions and c-sections. The program also helps clinicians and patients understand the consequences of early elective deliveries and the importance of the last weeks of pregnancy.

*TIOP III* was funded by the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses. It was a collaborative effort of more than 40 experts from a wide variety of organizations, including The Joint Commission and the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

For online access to the entire *TIOP III* report, visit [marchofdimes.com](http://marchofdimes.com).

The March of Dimes is the leading nonprofit organization for pregnancy and baby health. With chapters nationwide, the March of Dimes works to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. For the latest resources and information, visit [marchofdimes.com](http://marchofdimes.com) or [nacersano.org](http://nacersano.org). Find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

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